MARX

ON

CHINA

ARTICLES FROM

THE NEW YORK DAILY TRIBUNE

1853 - 1860

Marx on China

In this volume are collected Marx's articles on China, contributed to the *New York Tribune* in the years 1853-60, now republished for the first time.

China today is celebrating her national liberation after a century of foreign invasion and foreign exploitation. The war described by Marx in these articles was the decisive event which opened up China to Western civilization, ending with the capture of Peking, the legalization of the opium traffic and the imposition of conditions which laid the foundations for later imperialism.

Marx is here seen as a journalist reporting events as they happen, with quotations or comments from contemporary British Press and Parliamentary reports. He vividly describes the debates in Parliament and discusses the politics of the day. The articles illuminate a neglected phase of our history.

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CHINA
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ARTICLES FROM
THE NEW YORK DAILY TRIBUNE

With an Introduction and Notes
by
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1951
LAWRENCE & WISHART
LONDON

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
CHARLES BIRCHALL AND SONS, LTD.,
LONDON AND LIVERPOOL

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Marx's articles on China belong to the same years as those written for the *New York Daily Tribune* by himself or Engels on the Spanish Revolution, on Russia, the Eastern question and the Crimean War, on India and the Indian 'Mutiny', and on British politics.

As to authentication, the essential preliminaries are available in the *Chronik* (1933) of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, and we owe our thanks to those who began the technical work. It is well known that on Russia and the Eastern question the articles were sometimes subjected by the *Tribune* editors to gross distortions and suppressions. The articles on China, India and British politics were better treated because the *Tribune* had few objections to exposures of British ruling class policy. But Marx had one standing complaint which can be understood from the present volume. Since his function was not to supply 'hot news', which was otherwise provided for, his articles as London correspondent were frequently printed in the *Tribune* as its own leading articles. At first a few unimportant items were abstracted and put in separately under his name, but the result of his protests was that, after April, 1855, his name was banished altogether. Sometimes he had also to endure additions expressing editorial views. (Cf. notes to pp. 33, 36, 66, 87).

Titles added where the *Tribune* has none are placed in square brackets. All the original titles are reproduced.

In the usual division of labour between Marx and Engels at this time, Marx wrote on diplomacy and politics, Engels on financial and military affairs; but for China and India, Marx dealt with everything except the military subjects. This volume contains only one article by Engels: No. 8.

As to the text, a few obvious misprints have been corrected, sources of direct quotations have mostly been identified and some minor corrections (usually in the placing of quotation marks) inserted. Spelling has been anglicized and that of Chinese names modernized. (British officials had not yet decided between Shanghae and Shanghai).

Marx's figures have generally been left unaltered. He used the best sources then available to illustrate arguments on the course of trade which are now accepted; contemporary figures of Chinese trade in the 40's and 50's, however, not only vary among themselves, but include some other unsatisfactory features. Most of the figures relating to opium are estimates.

A few notes have been added, but no attempt has been made to annotate every point.

The Summary of Events is intended to be used for reference along with the articles, partly because dates are at times confusing. Mails from China took perhaps two months, official communications were not always speedily released in London, and Marx's articles might be published in New York in little more than a fortnight after despatch, but frequently were not.

INTRODUCTION

I

THE ARTICLES here reprinted all belong to the period when, by means of war, China was finally 'opened up' to Western civilization. "Another civilization war" against China "seems to be a matter now generally settled with the English press," comments Marx in October, 1859 (p. 78). He is referring to the 'Third Chinese War' or 'Third Opium War,' which arose as the later and most important phase of the Second Opium War and is now usually merged with it under a more respectable title: the Second China War. This war, in its two stages, is the subject of Marx's articles, which, unfortunately, come to an end some months before the last act, the storming and capture of Peking in September 1860.

The first of the articles, written three years before the war was launched, gives the background of the whole. The story had begun towards the end of the 18th century, when the East India Company, which conducted the China trade, was faced by an increasingly unfavourable balance. The barbarians, as the English were termed in Chinese documents until 1860 (p. 68), needed increasing quantities of Chinese silk, chinaware, tea and ginger, but having little that the Chinese wanted in exchange, had to pay mainly in silver. "The said barbarians, except in guns and firearms, have not one single peculiar talent," remarked a Chinese official in 1834.(1) To check the drain of silver from India to China, the export of Indian opium was extended. Originally a legal Chinese import, used in small quantities for medicine, "this vile dirt of foreign countries" was prohibited in 1799, but despite increasingly severe penalties its import continually grew. Marx deals in more detail with the early phase in articles No. 9 and No. 10; the picture he draws in 1853 has the contemporary features.

With the expansion of the China trade (and notably of the tea trade) after the East India Company had lost its monopoly (1833-34), the problem of the unfavourable balance had become acute; by 1837 illicit opium is said to have constituted 53 per cent of all Chinese imports. Defeated in Britain's First Opium War (1839-42), China had to open to British mer-

(1) *Correspondence and Papers relating to China*, 1840. (Parl. 1857, XI, p. 66).

chants four ports in addition to Canton, to cede Hong-Kong and to give ' extra-territorial ' privileges to the foreigners on her soil. Thus began the hundred and more years of foreign aggression, invasion and domination from which the Chinese people today are determined to be free. For they have become a different people:

" Our nation will never again be an insulted nation. We have stood up."(2)

After the First Opium War, the Imperial Government continued its ban on opium, but with victorious Britain seated in Hong Kong, which became ' the opium shop of China,' the traffic far outran possibilities of control. It was encouraged by the British Government in India, which held the monopoly of poppy cultivation in Bengal and developed it for revenue purposes. " Our Government in India," explains the *Economist*, " is dependent for revenue on the sale of opium in China, as the people of England are dependent for their breakfasts and their evening meals on the produce of that empire " (p. 8).

Apart from relatively small amounts of Indian raw cotton and of British manufactured goods, opium became the main means of paying for Chinese exports and of reversing the drain of silver into one from China to India. Indian officials and British and Chinese merchants and shippers were thus involved in an expanding and practically unconcealed opium smuggling business, through which many people grew richer and some, like the British founder of Jardine, Matheson & Co., made great fortunes.

The new war, for which the incident of the Arrow (No. 2) afforded the pretext, might have come sooner but for the beginning, in March 1854, of the war against Russia in the Crimea. For, as Marx shows, the misery and demoralization engendered by the First Opium War had produced increasing disorder and revolt, leading not only to the attacks on foreigners which had already brought warships to Shanghai (p. 6) but to the far more significant rising of the people against their Imperial Government. The Taiping rebellion, the first social revolution attempted in China, continued for the next ten years and affected almost every province. Defeated at last by the help of the foreigners led by the British hero Gordon, it left behind it traditions later inherited by Sun Yat Sen.

(2) Mao Tse-tung, Sept. 21, 1949. (Quoted from *People's Democratic Dictatorship*, 1950. (p. 33).

But the China trade was being injured at a moment when it was becoming increasingly important to British domestic policy. " The great Powers of the West are expected to interfere for the preservation of order in the East . . . We derive from China the materials of our breakfasts " (p. 6). (Indian tea did not become common till the 'eighties). Cheaper and larger tea imports were among the aims of Gladstone's first great Free Trade budget in 1853 (p. 4), intended both to lower the cost of living ('free breakfast table') and to further manufacturers' interests. And indeed, as later references in this volume show, it was time for the opium racket to be superseded; not because stupor, corruption and death were its concomitants, but because it put money into the wrong pockets. The manufacturers had not profited enough from the First Opium War (Nos. 11 and 16). By 1847 opium was clearly in their way. Sir John Bowring, before embarking on his dramatic career in Canton and Hong Kong, had sat on the Committee which heard evidence in this sense (pp. 53, 54). In fact, like the East India Company in India, which in 1853 was being attacked for wasteful methods, the British way of life in China included too many old fashions familiar to the mercantilist age, when commerce and plunder, piracy and war were seldom clearly distinguished. Not only was the interior of China disorderly;[3] her coasts had become a scene of piracy[4] and of British and American slave-trading[5] scarcely to be imagined without reference to contemporary

[3] Already in 1846 the Commercial Association of Manchester was demanding better protection for British merchants and property in Canton. *Correspondence between the Foreign Office and the Commercial Association of Manchester*, 1846-48. (1857. XLIII).

[4] Ships of the British Navy carried out ' anti-piratical ' operations in the China Seas in 1854-56.

[5] Chinese subjects were forbidden to emigrate but their Government was unable to enforce the prohibition. The kidnapping of labourers (known as the ' pig trade ') and their sale for perhaps 20 or 30 dollars apiece was described by Rutherford Alcock, British Consul at Canton, as " a slave trade of the worst description." " There can be no respect for foreign flags and no security to foreigners while such doings are associated with them in the Chinese mind." " Chinese subjects were indeed the ostensible agents, but foreigners were the employers, and ships and lorchas under foreign flags supplied the means." (April 12, 1859; *Correspondence respecting Emigration from Canton.* (1860. LXIX). J. W. Ward, the American Plenipotentiary, in papers laid before Congress (1860), denounced the ' coolie trade ' carried on by American ships.

accounts. It was high time to 'open up' the country to legalized forms of exploitation and to unite it more closely with the civilized world, with 'free trade and peace'. For China was becoming increasingly important, not only as a potential market, but as the entrepot for the new markets that had opened in the Pacific since the gold discoveries in California and Australia and the flood of emigrants to those countries (pp. 80, 81). China was lagging behind. British cotton twist and cloth had overwhelmed Indian manufacturers between 1818 and 1837; 1853 was the year of Lord Dalhousie's famous minute on the necessity for Indian railways. In the Straits Settlements, Singapore and the East Indies, imports of British machine-made goods had greatly increased between 1830 and 1840; here a ferment was taking place in 1857 (p. 49)

The incident which started the war may have been unpremeditated but a good deal of policy admittedly went before it (pp. 30, 31, 83) and a great deal more followed. Palmerston, censured by Parliament for the episode of the Arrow, but triumphantly returned at the general election immediately afterwards, had despatched Lord Elgin as Plenipotentiary to China before the House reassembled. His appointment was announced, but not the detailed instructions he carried with him.(6) He was to deal with the situation in Canton (he bombarded and captured it in December 1857), but also to insist on treaty revisions, greatly increased facilities for trade, especially in the interior, and rights of direct communication with and representation at Peking. Legalization of the opium trade and of coolie 'emigration', as well as a treaty with Japan, were also envisaged as desirable. Elgin had power to break off negotiations and, in effect, to make war; was assured of successive reinforcements, told to enlist French co-operation on his way through Paris and given a choice of seven methods of coercion with which to 'influence' the Peking Government, the first being a blockade of the Peiho. At this time, Foreign Office communications between

(6) Foreign Office instructions dated April 20, 1857. See the Blue Book published two years later: *Correspondence relative to the Earl of Elgin's Special Missions to China and Japan*, 1857-59 (1859), Nos. 1-3. This Blue Book is referred to in notes below as the Elgin Correspondence. Parliament reassembled on April 30. Debate on the Queen's speech, May 7.

China and Britain took at least six weeks each way; ' telegraphic news ' with the Far East was in its infancy. Was that the explanation?

The objects named were duly carried out by the end of 1858. This first stage of the war was concluded by the Treaty of Tientsin(7), which did not, however, give very great satisfaction at home (especially when it was discovered that the Russian Tientsin Treaty had been signed a fortnight before it). The new and fiercest stage of the war arose from the conditions of the Treaty ratification a year later, and followed the British defeat on the Peiho. The situation was changing:—

" A deliberate outrage on the British flag . . . it leaves no alternative but war. . . . Otherwise our trade and influence will be destroyed; France, Russia or the U.S.A. will supersede us. . . . There must be no faltering while the blood of our murdered soldiers and sailors remains unavenged."(8)

The war was concluded by the Treaty of Peking. (*Nos.* 13-17 and Summary of Events).

II

Marx's brilliant accounts of Parliamentary affairs (Nos. 3, 4, 13, 17) indicate the background at home. Between the Repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 and the beginnings of the new Whig-Liberal alignment in 1859, both the old parties were disintegrated, while the new middle classes, still to a large extent unenfranchised or unrepresented, were now too much divided by competition to act together independently. Even within these few pages the differences between old Anti-Corn Law Leaguers (Cobden, Bowring, Wilson, Gibson) become visible; the election which returned Palmerston in 1857 was the turning point for the ' Manchester men ' (p. 32). The crucial home problem was a second Reform Act with increased representation for the middle classes, but the middle classes, since Chartist days, could not forget the working class

(7) Opium was not named in the Treaty, which, however, provided for a new customs tariff. The new tariff was then speedily established by the Shanghai Convention and included opium. See further p. 65.

(8) *Daily Telegraph*, Sept. 14, 1859.

menace. Meanwhile, whichever fraction or combination was in office, every Cabinet and the whole State machine were manned and controlled by the aristocratic governing caste. On this basis, Palmerston, the most consistent foe of reform, could at times and in some directions exercise his ' dictatorship '; but his policy in 1855-58 was one that no section could effectively resist: aggressive capitalist expansion, besides its importance in the ' balance of power ' abroad, provided economic concessions for the middle classes whilst leaving the political ' citadel of privilege ' intact. Marx's comment on the substitution of war for reform (pp. 25-26) recalls remarks made at the time of Lord John Russell's Reform Bill on the eve of the Crimean War.(9)

Thus in relation to China we first see Palmerston defeated by a combination of fractions but supported by ' the country '; later his Tory opponents themselves carry on his policy and conduct a full-scale war for England's honour; and finally in 1859, just as Marx's articles are ending, Richard Cobden, who moved the censure on Palmerston in 1857, is concerting with him the Anglo-French Treaty (p. 93), and Gladstone, his greatest adversary, has joined his Cabinet, which is in power when 10,000 troops achieve at length the capture of Peking. The constitutional aspect—war without the consent of Parliament—was raised more than once, but in vain (pp. 22, 26, 72, 83-86, 93-98).(10)

The political changes of 1859, however, were not concerned with China; and the events in China formed part of a wider and more complex picture which is not our subject.

(9) " [Palmerston] hopes by raising the war cry to drown the demand for an extension of the suffrage. This is the game which has been played before and, as you wisely foresee, is about to be played again." (Sir James Graham to Lord John Russell, Spencer-Walpole: *Life of Lord John Russell*, 1889, II 198). The alternatives, said Disraeli, were " Reform or War "; he prophesied " a war and no reform." (Monypenny and Buckle, 1929 edition. I pp. 1,345-46).

(10) The *Daily Telegraph*, when the news of the defeat on the Peiho arrived, gave a neat twist to the Parliamentary question, directed perhaps against the pretentions of the Crown in this period. " This is not a matter calling for the direct or hurried interference of Parliament. We have responsible Ministers, and they have a clear duty to perform; if not, why do we cling to the constitutional theory of a Throne? Why do we vest the advisers of the Crown with authority? Why have we an army or a navy? " Sept. 16, 1859.

The years 1853-60, which included the Crimean War and the Persian War, the Great Rebellion in India and the two stages of the China War, were in many respects years of transition. Thus the 'Mutiny' in India, and the Chinese victory on the Peiho evoked on the one hand new, appalling manifestations of 'white man's' self assertion; on the other, expressions of disapproval, distaste or distress which might come from political figures like Bright and Cobden, Crown representatives like Canning and Elgin (in private correspondence) or from sections of the press. But the last named sentiments soon lost impetus. For it could be said of those who held them:

> "They all tell you that in principle . . . competition, monopoly, etc., are the only basis of life, but that in practice they leave much to be desired. They all want competition without its tragic effects. They all want the impossible: namely the conditions of bourgeois existence without the necessary consequences of those conditions."[11]

III

This brings us to Marx's attitude regarding events in China. It was determined, first, by his fundamental conception of the tragic contradiction inherent both in the 'conditions of bourgeois existence' and in the entire period of human civilization, that is to say, of class society in all its stages of dialectical movement. The importance of the stage reached by bourgeois society is that it creates the class and the material prerequisites through which this civilization itself (including the 'civilization-mongers' referred to in our story) can be abolished, and with them the pre-human stage of man's progress.[12] For this, increased production is not enough, there must be appropriation and control by the people, which the system of private profit-making cannot admit. Marx's classic study of the progressive aspects of bourgeois development in India, and its limitations, belongs to the same months as his first article on China.[13] "Has the bourgeoise . . . ever

[11] Marx to P. V. Annenkov, 28 December, 1846.
[12] F. Engels: *Anti-Dühring*, p. 318; *Origin of the Family*, p. 202f.
[13] *New Tork Daily Tribune* June-August 1853. Cf. R. P. Dutt: *India To-day*, 1940, p. 93f. 2nd Indian edition, 1949, p. 80f.

effected a progress without dragging individuals and peoples through blood and dirt, through misery and degradation?" he asks in thinking of India. So in China he discerns the "tragical couplet" of "antiquated" morality versus modern free trade morality (p. 55), but cherishes no illusions about Old China—"vegetating in the teeth of time." In China, however, the English will never be able to become the supreme landlords as they have done in India. "In China the English have not yet wielded this power, nor are they likely ever to do so" (p. 92).

The period itself was one of immense changes. In *The Communist Manifesto* Marx and Engels had already shown how modern industry by its cheap commodities and development of communications "batters down all Chinese walls," "compels all nations . . . to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves," and was making "nations of peasants" dependent on "nations of bourgeois," "the East on the West." But, as Engels remarked in 1852, "California and Australia," "the creation of new markets out of nothing," "were not foreseen in the *Manifesto*."(14) To Marx in 1850 the discovery of gold in California was more important than the European revolutions of 1848, because of future effects on the peoples of the East. The lands around the Pacific Ocean were being drawn into the world market. As in the great age of discovery three centuries earlier, so now for the second time "world trade was taking a new direction."(15) In 1858, after the first news of the Tientsin Treaty (p. 52) and of the Treaty with Japan, he wrote to Engels:

> "We cannot deny that bourgeois society has experienced its sixteenth century a second time—a sixteenth century which will, I hope, sound the death knell of bourgeois society, just as the first one thrust it into existence. The particular task of bourgeois society is the establishment of the world market, at least in outline, and of production based upon the world market. As the world is round, this seems to have been completed by the colonization of California and Australia and the opening up of China and Japan". (Oct. 8th, 1858).

(14) Engels to Marx, August 21, 1852.

(15) *Neue Rheinische Revue*, Jan. 31, 1850. (cf. Nov. 1, 1850). *Nachlass*, ed. F. Mehring, 1923, Vol. III pp. 443-45.

He had begun to think about the relation between East and West in terms of revolution. He first read of the Taiping rebellion in a report by the well-known German missionary, Carl Gutzlaff, who, visiting Europe after twenty years' absence, was horrified to find that even here he could not escape from talk of deadly socialistic doctrines which seemed the very same as those preached " by many people among the mob in China ".[16] So perhaps, dreamed Marx, when our European reactionaries have to take refuge in Asia and at last reach the Great Wall of China, guarding the very hearth of reactionary conservatism, they may find inscribed above its gates :—

" *Chinese Republic. Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.*" [17]

" Can mankind fulfil its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia?" he asked in 1853. And in the letter of 1858 already quoted he suggests the crucial clue, namely that the new expansion of capitalism in the East may have a negative effect on the socialist revolution in Europe (then, as he believed, imminent). " Is it not bound to be crushed in this little corner, considering that in a far greater territory the movement of bourgeois society is still on the ascendant?"

Marx did not live to see capitalism pass from the ' ascendant ': from progress to reaction, from the development of production to that of destruction. The epoch of imperialism was first analysed scientifically, from the basis built up in *Capital*, by Lenin in 1916. In 1853-60 Marx sees the ' world market ' completed in outline; the imperialist structure is not there; but we notice features appearing that were to become all too familiar to successive generations in China: the revolt of the people is bad for trade; foreigners and certain Chinese classes must unite in repression; foreign control is necessary; foreign Powers compete together but for certain purposes unite; Western civilization is superior and must assert itself by force.

Nor did Marx live to see the great uprisings of the people, the great transformations, first in Russia and then in China, or the victories won in his name. Let Mao Tse-tung sum up:

[16] Gutslaff, forgetting the dangerous side of Christianity, had himself reinforced the nefarious ideas of the Taipings by translating the Bible into Chinese.

[17] *Neue Rheinische Revue* as above.

" Following China's defeat in the Opium War of 1840, advanced Chinese experienced countless difficulties in their search for truth from the Western countries . . . all Chinese who craved progress would read any book so long as it contained the new teachings of the West . . . the modern culture of Western bourgeois democracy . . .

" Of the foreign countries at that time, only the Western capitalist countries were progressive. They had succeeded in creating modern bourgeois states . . .

" Imperialist invasions shattered Chinese delusions about learning from the West. Was it not strange that the teachers should always be encroaching upon their pupils? The Chinese learned quite a lot from the West, but they could not put what they learned into effect . . . Their ideals could not be realized . . . All of their many struggles, including such a nation-wide movement as the revolution of 1911, ended in failure . . .

" The Russians carried out the October Revolution, creating the first Socialist state in the world . . . The Chinese people and all mankind began to look at the Russians in a new light. Then and only then the Chinese entered an entirely new era, both in thought and in life. They found Marxism-Leninism, a universal truth which is applicable anywhere. The face of China then began to change . . . Follow the path of the Russians—this was the conclusion . . .

" Bourgeois democracy gave way to the People's Democracy under the leadership of the working class, and the bourgeois republic gave way to the People's Republic. This, then, created the possibility of making a transition through a People's Republic to Socialism and Communism, to the elimination of classes and the attainment of universal harmony . . .

" The imperialists and the domestic reactionaries will certainly not take their defeat lying down; they will still put up a final struggle."([18])

D.T.

([18]) Mao Tse-tung, *Op. cit.* pp. 7-10; 33.

SUMMARY OF EVENTS 1833-1864

(References to articles are in italics)

1833 East India Co.'s monopoly of China trade ends. Canton the only Chinese port open to foreign trade.

1839-1842 First British Opium War. Treaty of Nanking : four new ports opened to foreign trade (Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, Shanghai). Hongkong ceded to Britain. Still no European representatives at the Imperial capital, Peking. *History of trade, results of First Opium War, etc.: Nos.* 1, 5, 9, 10.

1843 'Supplementary Treaties' gives 'extra-territorial' rights to British subjects. *Nos.* 2, 3.

1844 U.S.A. took no part in war but by Treaty of Wanghsia shared 'most favoured nation' rights of commerce, residence, missionary work, etc.

1846 Russia begins advance towards Manchuria. *Russia and China Nos.* 5, 8 (p. 51), 13 (p. 74).

1850-1853 Revolutionary movement of the common people takes shape in the south, partly inspired by Christian ideas preached to peasants and labourers by a disappointed scholar, Hung Hsiu chuan, who became Tien Wang (Heavenly King), leader of the great Taiping rebellion (Taiping, the Great Peace). Unlike some revolutionary secret societies (especially the 'Triads' who attacked Shanghai, p. 6[n]), the Taipings were not against the foreign traders; but they forbade opium smoking and called for restoration of "the old virtues," sometimes identifying themselves with a return of the Ming dynasty as of a past golden age. They warred against taxation and for the land, killing mandarins, landlords and their supporters, burning title deeds, dividing up the land, providing for the poor, destroying idols, and treating women as equal to men. In 1852 they moved northwards and early in 1853 seized Nanking, which remained their capital till 1864. General Li's great march failed just short of Peking (May 1853) but all China became affected by the

rebellion which involved the army of the Imperial Government in constant fighting till the end came in 1864.

1853 British, supported by French and Americans, help Chinese merchants to defend Shanghai against attack of 'Triads'; foreigners gain control of Shanghai customs administration. *No.* 1, *p.* 6[n].

1856 *Oct.-Dec.* Beginning of Second Opium War. The small vessel *Arrow*, Chinese owned and manned, had been temporarily registered as British at Hongkong (a device convenient for piracy). The British licence, of doubtful legality, had expired on September 27th. On October 8th, Chinese authorities at Canton, searching for two pirates, boarded the *Arrow*, which no longer flew the British ensign, and arrested 12 of her crew. Sequence of events, October, November 1856 :— British Consul Parkes demands delivery of prisoners as from a British ship ; Canton Governor Yeh refuses ; Sir John Bowring, Chief Superintendent of Trade, thinking Canton authorities will not know licence had expired, demands apology within 48 hours for insult to British flag. Yeh refuses. Admiral Seymour at Bowring's request, attacks and captures outer forts and fires buildings. Yeh as concession delivers prisoners, asks that two be returned for trial as pirates and refuses apology. Parkes objects to manner of delivery, refuses to receive prisoners. Bowring claims admission to the city (cf. *pp.* 14, 15, 21, 22, 31). Yeh refuses. Seymour shells public buildings. Yeh offers rewards for destruction of Englishmen and their ships. British capture Bogue forts and burn western suburbs of Canton. *The Lorcha "Arrow": Nos.* 2, 3, 4, 6.

1856 (*December*) *to March* 1857. Anglo-Persian war. *Persia compared with China No.* 8.

1857 *January.* Widespread anti-foreign agitation in South China: foreign factories fired; eleven Europeans murdered on mail steamer Thistle; bread-poisoning scare in Hongkong. Similar agitation in Singapore, Malaya, Sarawak, etc. *Nos.* 7, 8 (*pp.* 48-50).
Feb. 24-*March* 3. Parliamentary debates on *Arrow* case. Defeat of Palmerston, who appeals to the country. *Nos.* 3, 4.

April. General elections return Palmerston with increased majority. Expedition to China preparing. Far-reaching instructions to new Plenipotentiary, Lord Elgin, envisaging the use of force to gain a new Treaty.
May. Many Chinese killed by Admiral Seymour's expedition up Canton river. Indian Mutiny begins.
July. Elgin reaches Hongkong, having diverted troops from Singapore to India. Retires to Calcutta.
September-October. Elgin returns, troops arrive, joint operations against Canton planned with French.
November-December. Economic crisis in U.S.A. and N. Europe. Suspension of Bank Act in Britain. Ultimatum to Yeh demands indemnity and opening of Canton. Yeh refuses. City bombarded for 27 hours without resistance Dec. 28-29. Captured.

1858 *February* 19. Palmerston resigns on an issue not connected with China. (Vote of censure in relation to his Conspiracy Bill after Orsini's attempt on Napoleon III). No dissolution. Tory Government, led by Lord Derby and Disraeli, continues China war. Foreign Secretary Lord Malmesbury. *No.* 15.
May. Advancing north, British and French capture Taku forts at mouth of Peiho (coastal defences of Peking) and enter Tientsin.
June 13. Russo-Chinese Tientsin Treaty yields to Russia Amur valley as Manchurian boundary and positions on Manchurian coast. *No.* 8, *p.* 51, *No.* 13, *p.* 74.
June 18. Tientsin Treaty gives U.S.A. equal rights to "most favoured nation" treatment and to a Legation at Peking.
June 26. Treaty of Tientsin signed with Britain; to be ratified in Peking in following year. *Nos.* 11, 12, 13.
July-December. Elgin takes two warships to Nagasaki and signs first Anglo-Japanese Treaty. (Aug. 26).
Elgin concludes Shanghai Convention which legalizes opium trade by fixing customs duties. Cf. *No.* 12 and *p.* 65. Elgin travels up the Yangtse. *No.* 16.

1859. *April.* Tories defeated on their Reform Bill and in general elections. Gladstone finally joins Liberals. On the "Italian question" he and Lord John Russell unite with Palmerston in new Whig-Liberal alignment; Palmerston Prime Minister 1859-65. *p.* 83.

1859 New phase of war. For Treaty ratification in Peking, the Chinese request envoys to proceed overland via Peitang. British and French envoys demand to proceed up the Peiho, the "Way of Honour." The Chinese refuse.

June. Admiral Hope attempts to force passage of the Peiho. Two British gunboats are sunk by fire from Taku forts; British casualties, 89 dead, 337 wounded. Anglo-French expedition has to retire to Shanghai. Chinese now ignore demands for new indemnities and Treaty ratification. *Nos.* 13, 14, 15, 17.

Treaty between China and U.S.A. ratified. The American envoy Ward took the way requested via Peitang. *p.* 73.

1860 *January.* Parliamentary Debates on unconstitutional character of Chinese war. *No.* 17.

July. Fresh large-scale Anglo-French forces assemble outside the Peiho. Taku forts captured after heavy battle. Chinese capture and imprison advance ratification party of whom majority die.

September. Peking surrenders.

October. Elgin has Summer Palace destroyed. Treaty of Peking ratifies and extends Treaty of Tientsin, doubling indemnity, adding additional open ports, etc.

November. Russo-Chinese Treaty yields to Russia all Manchurian coast down to Korea with district and bay renamed Vladivostock.

1861 First European Legations established at Peking. China has to create a Foreign Office.

1862 European administration of customs at Shanghai becomes general control of Chinese maritime customs with British Inspector General.

1860-1864 *End of the Taipings.* As the Imperial forces were weakened by the foreigners' war, the Taipings had grown stronger again, and at Shanghai in 1860, as in 1853, the Americans and British joined forces with the Chinese merchants to protect their common interests. With the control of the customs, there was now far more wealth at stake, as well as new possibilities if the interior could be opened up (*p.* 69). A mixed volunteer army, at first commanded by an American, took

the field and cooperated with the Imperial army. It grew into " The Ever Victorious Army " which crushed the people's revolt, its decisive successes being won (1863-64) with official British support and under the command of the Englishman who first became famous as " Chinese Gordon " (General Gordon, d. Khartoum, 1885). Nanking fell in July 1864.

1. REVOLUTION IN CHINA AND IN EUROPE

New York Daily Tribune, June 14, 1853[1]

A most profound yet fantastic speculator on the principles which govern the movements of Humanity was wont to extol as one of the ruling secrets of nature what he called the law of the contact of extremes. The homely proverb that " extremes meet " was, in his view, a grand and potent truth in every sphere of life; an axiom with which the philosopher could as little dispense as the astronomer with the laws of Kepler or the great discovery of Newton.

Whether the " contact of extremes " be such a universal principle or not, a striking illustration of it may be seen in the effect the Chinese revolution seems likely to exercise upon the civilized world. It may seem a very strange, and a very paradoxical assertion that the next uprising of the people of Europe, and their next movement for republican freedom and economy of Government, may depend more probably on what is now passing in the Celestial Empire—the very opposite of Europe—than on any other political cause that now exists—more even than on the menaces of Russia and the consequent likelihood of a general European war.[2] But yet it is no paradox, as all may understand by attentively considering the circumstances of the case.

Whatever be the social causes, and whatever religious, dynastic, or national shape they may assume, that have brought about the chronic rebellions subsisting in China for about ten years past, and now gathered together in one formidable revolution[3] the occasion of this outbreak has unquestionably been afforded by the English cannon forcing

(1) As a leading article.

(2) Britain and France declared war on Russia in March 1854.

(3) The Taiping rebellion (see p. xix). This, said the *Economist*, (May 21, 1853), appeared to be "a social change or convulsion such as have of late afflicted Europe . . . It is singular to find similar commotions at the same time in Asia and Europe. . . Nor is it less singular to find several other Powers at once interested in the fate of China ".

upon China that soporific drug called opium. Before the British arms the authority of the Manchu dynasty fell to pieces; the superstitious faith in the eternity of the Celestial Empire broke down; the barbarous and hermetic isolation from the civilized world was infringed; and an opening was made for that intercourse which has since proceeded so rapidly under the golden attractions of California and Australia. At the same time the silver coin of the Empire, its lifeblood, began to be drained away to the British East Indies.

Up to 1830, the balance of trade being continually in favour of the Chinese, there existed an uninterrupted importation of silver from India, Britain and the United States into China. Since 1833, and especially since 1840, the export of silver from China to India has become almost exhausting for the Celestial Empire.(1) Hence the strong decrees of the Emperor against the opium trade, responded to by still stronger resistance to his measures. Besides this immediate economical consequence, the bribery connected with opium smuggling has entirely demoralized the Chinese State officers in the Southern provinces. Just as the Emperor was wont to be considered the father of all China, so his officers were looked upon as sustaining the paternal relation to their respective districts. But this patriarchal authority, the only moral link embracing the vast machinery of the State, has gradually been corroded by the corruption of those officers, who have made great gains by conniving at opium smuggling. This has occurred principally in the same Southern provinces where the rebellion commenced. It is almost needless to observe that, in the same measure in which opium has obtained the

(1) On the contribution made through opium to the revenue of the British Government in India, cf. pp. 8, 58. Referring to this in 1858, an American merchant in Shanghai commented: "As this enormous sum is drawn entirely from foreign consumers and levied with remarkable ease and certainty, it is not surprising that the Anglo-Indian Government—a highly expensive administration in an exceedingly poor and very fully taxed country—should encourage the trade that supplies it. That it does so is known to all the world and there is at present no sign of an intention to do otherwise." In 1858, opium, brought mainly in British and American ships, constituted about a third of the imports into Shanghai, not one of the chief opium ports. (Elgin Correspondence, pp. 393-97).

For Marx's survey of the China trade up to the Second Opium War, see Nos. 5, 9, 10, 11. The later stage: No. 16.

sovereignty over the Chinese, the Emperor and his staff of pedantic mandarins have become dispossessed of their own sovereignty. It would seem as though history had first to make this whole people drunk before it could rouse them out of their hereditary stupidity.

Though scarcely existing in former times, the import of English cottons, and to a small extent of English woollens, has rapidly risen since 1833, the epoch when the monopoly of trade with China was transferred from the East India Company to private commerce, and on a much greater scale since 1840, the epoch when other nations, and especially our own, also obtained a share in the Chinese trade. This introduction of foreign manufactures has had a similar effect on the native industry to that which it formerly had on Asia Minor, Persia and India. In China the spinners and weavers have suffered greatly under this foreign competition, and the community has become unsettled in proportion.

The tribute to be paid to England after the unfortunate war of 1840, the great unproductive consumption of opium, the drain of the precious metals by this trade, the destructive influence of foreign competition on native manufactures, the demoralized condition of the public administration, produced two things: the old taxation became more burdensome and harassing, and new taxation was added to the old. Thus in a decree of the Emperor, dated Peking, Jan. 5, 1853, we find orders given to the viceroys and governors of the southern provinces of Wuchang and Hanyang to remit and defer the payment of taxes, and especially not in any case to exact more than the regular amount; for otherwise, says the decree, " how will the poor people be able to bear it ? " And " Thus, perhaps," continues the Emperor, " will my people, in a period of general hardship and distress, be exempted from the evils of being pursued and worried by the tax-gatherer."(1) Such language as this, and such concessions we remember to have heard from Austria, the China of Germany, in 1848.

(1) " . . . now when Yochow has been lost, and the trouble has extended to Wuchang and Hanyang, our solicitude and anxiety for the south has increased," stated the decree which aroused Marx's irony. *Economist* April 30th, 1853. The scarcity of silver—the coin in which taxation had to be paid—added greatly to the people's burdens.

For ' provinces ' *read* districts. Those named are on the Yangtse, west of Hankow.

All these dissolving agencies acting together on the finances, the morals, the industry, and political structure of China(1), received their full development under the English cannon in 1840, which broke down the authority of the Emperor, and forced the Celestial Empire into contact with the terrestrial world. Complete isolation was the prime condition of the preservation of Old China. That isolation having come to a violent end by the medium of England, dissolution must follow as surely as that of any mummy carefully preserved in a hermetically sealed coffin, whenever it is brought into contact with the open air. Now, England having brought about the revolution of China, the question is how that revolution will in time react on England, and through England on Europe. This question is not difficult of solution.

The attention of our readers has often been called to the unparalleled growth of British manufactures since 1850. Amid the most surprising prosperity, it has not been difficult to point out the clear symptoms of an approaching industrial crisis. Notwithstanding California and Australia, notwithstanding the immense and unprecedented emigration, there must ever, without any particular accident, in due time arrive a moment when the extension of the markets is unable to keep pace with the extension of British manufactures, and this disproportion must bring about a new crisis with the same certainty as it has done in the past. But, if one of the great markets suddenly becomes contracted, the arrival of the crisis is necessarily accelerated thereby. Now, the Chinese rebellion must, for the time being, have precisely this effect upon England. The necessity for opening new markets, or for extending the old ones, was one of the principle causes of the reduction of the British tea-duties, as, with an increased importation of tea, an increased exportation of manufactures to China was expected to take place.(2) Now, the value of the annual exports from the United Kingdom to China amounted, before the repeal in 1834 of the trading monopoly possessed by the East India Company, to only £600,000; in 1836, it reached the sum of £1,326,388; in 1845, it had risen to £2,394,827; in 1852 it amounted to about £3,000,000. The quantity of tea impor-

(1) For counteracting factors to the "dissolving agencies" see Nos. 11 & 16 Cf. *Capital*, III 389-393.

(2) Gladstone's budget of 1853 made a reduction of the tea duty by more than half, to be spread over three years.

ted from China did not exceed, in 1793, 16,167,331 lbs.; but in 1845, it amounted to 50,714,657 lbs.; in 1846, to 57,584,561 lbs.; it is now above 60,000,000 lbs.(1)

The tea crop of the last season will not prove short, as shown already by the export lists from Shanghai, of 2,000,000 lbs. above the preceding year. This excess is to be accounted for by two circumstances. On one hand, the state of the market at the close of 1851 was much depressed, and the large surplus stock left has been thrown into the export of 1852. On the other hand, the recent accounts of the altered British legislation with regard to imports of tea, reaching China, have brought forward all the available teas to a ready market, at greatly enhanced prices. But with respect to the coming crop, the case stands very differently. This is shown by the following extracts from the correspondence of a large tea-firm in London:

> " In Shanghai the terror is described as extreme. Gold had advanced in value upwards of 25 per cent., *being eagerly sought for hoarding;* silver had so far disappeared that *none could be obtained* to pay the Chinese dues on the British vessels requiring port clearance; and in consequence of which Mr. Consul Alcock has consented to become responsible to the Chinese authorities for the payment of these dues, on receipt of East India Company's bills, or other approved securities. *The scarcity of the precious metals* is one of the most unfavourable features, when viewed in reference to the immediate future of commerce, as this abstraction occurs precisely at that period when their use is most needed, to enable the tea and silk buyers to go into their interior and effect their purchases, for which a *large portion of bullion is paid in advance, to enable the producers to carry on their operations.*"
>
> At this period of the year it is usual to begin making arrangements for the new teas, whereas at present nothing is talked of but the means of protecting person and property, all transactions being at a stand. "...if the means are not applied to secure the leaves in April and May, the early crop, which includes all the finer descriptions, both of black and green teas, will be as much lost as unreaped wheat at Christmas."(2)

(1) The first two British ' China clippers ' were launched at Aberdeen in 1851. The American clippers had preceded them.

(2) Circular of Moffatt & Co., Fenchurch St., from the *Economist*, May 21, 1853. Marx's italics.

Now the means for securing the tea leaves will certainly not be given by the English, American or French squadrons stationed in the Chinese seas,(1) but these may easily, by their interference, produce such complications as to cut off all transactions between the tea-producing interior and the tea-exporting sea ports. Thus, for the present crop, a rise in the prices must be expected—speculation has already commenced in London—and for the crop to come a large deficit is as good as certain. Nor is this all. The Chinese, ready though they may be, as are all people in periods of revolutionary convulsion, to sell off to the foreigner all the bulky commodities they have on hand, will, as the Orientals are used to do in the apprehension of great changes, set to hoarding, not taking much in return for their tea and silk, except hard money. England has accordingly to expect a rise in the price of one of her chief articles of consumption, a drain of bullion, and a great contraction of an important market for her cotton and woollen goods. Even the *Economist*, that optimist conjurer of all things menacing the tranquil minds of the mercantile community, is compelled to use language like this:

> " We must not flatter ourselves with finding as extensive a market as formerly for our exports to China . . . It is more probable, therefore, that our export trade to China should suffer, and that there should be a diminished demand for the produce of Manchester and Glasgow."(2)

It must not be forgotten that the rise in the price of so indispensable an article as tea, and the contraction of so important a market as China, will coincide with a deficient harvest in Western Europe, and, therefore, with rising prices of meat, corn, and all other agricultural produce. Hence contracted markets for manufacturers, because every rise in

(1) The *Economist* (May 21st, 1853) noted " the assembling at Shanghai of the naval forces of the three great maritime Powers of the world for the protection of the Empire of China . . . The great Powers of the West are expected to interfere for the preservation of order in the East . . . We derive from China the materials of our breakfasts. . . ." The possible dismemberment of China, remarked Messrs. Moffatt, "can scarcely fail to create much interest among the maritime powers of Europe," while "confusion and anarchy " were a threat to " the extensive commerce of the English and American merchants ". The English, supported by the French and Americans, now seized the customs administration at Shanghai which remained outside Chinese control till 1943.

(2) *Economist* May 21, 1853.

the prices of the first necessaries of life is counterbalanced, at home and abroad, by a corresponding reduction in the demand for manufactures. From every part of Great Britain complaints have been received on the backward state of most of the crops. The *Economist* says on this subject:

> In the South of England " not only will there be left much land unsown, until too late for a crop of any sort, but much of the sown land will prove to be foul, or otherwise in a bad state for corn-growing." On the wet or poor soils destined for wheat, signs that mischief is going on are apparent. " The time for planting mangel-wurzel may now be said to have passed away, and very little has been planted, while the time for preparing land for turnips is rapidly going by, without any adequate preparation for this important crop having been accomplished . . . oat-sowing has been much interfered with by the snow and rain. Few oats were sown early, and late-sown oats seldom produce a large crop.
>
> In many districts losses among the breeding flocks have been considerable. The price of other farm-produce than corn is from 20 to 30, and even 50 per cent. higher than last year. On the Continent, corn has risen comparatively more than in England. Rye has risen in Belgium and Holland a full 100 per cent. Wheat and other grains are following suit.(1)

Under these circumstances, as the greater part of the regular commercial circle has already been run through by British trade, it may safely be augured that the Chinese revolution will throw the spark into the overloaded mine of the present industrial system and cause the explosion of the long-prepared general crisis, which, spreading abroad, will be closely followed by political revolutions on the Continent.(2) It would be a curious spectacle, that of China sending disorder into the Western World while the Western Powers, by English, French and American war-steamers, are conveying " order " to Shanghai, Nanking and the mouths of the Great Canal. Do these order-mongering Powers, which would attempt to sup-

(1) *Economist* May 14th, 1853.

(2) The great economic crisis which eventually arrived in 1857 was the first world crisis and involved a number of new factors. That Marx and Engels were mistaken in their revolutionary expectations at this time is well known (*Selected Correspondence* pp. 85-85, Gustav Mayer, *Frederick Engels* 1936 pp. 151-157). Less well known are the study and criticism by which they continuously developed their theory of crises.

port the wavering Manchu dynasty, forget that the hatred against foreigners and their exclusion from the Empire, once the mere result of China's geographical and ethnographical situation, have become a political system only since the conquest of the country by the race of the Manchu Tatars? There can be no doubt that the turbulent dissensions among the European nations who, at the later end of the 17th century, rivaled each other in the trade with China, lent a mighty aid to the exclusive policy adopted by the Manchus. But more than this was done by the fear of the new dynasty, lest the foreigners might favour the discontent existing among a large proportion of the Chinese during the first half-century or thereabouts of their subjection to the Tatars. From these considerations, foreigners were then prohibited from all communication with the Chinese, except through Canton, a town at a great distance from Peking and the tea-districts, and their commerce restricted to intercourse with the Hong merchants(1), licensed by the Government expressly for the foreign trade, in order to keep the rest of its subjects from all connection with the odious strangers. In any case an interference on the part of the Western Governments at this time can only serve to render the revolution more violent, and protract the stagnation of trade.

At the same time it is to be observed with regard to India that the British Government of that country depends for full one seventh of its revenue on the sale of opium to the Chinese while a considerable proportion of the Indian demand for British manufactures depends on the production of that opium in India.(2) The Chinese, it is true, are no more likely to renounce the use of opium than are the Germans to forswear tobacco. But as the new Emperor is understood to be favourable to the culture of the poppy and the preparation of opium

(1) Hong, guild.

(2) "Our Government in India is dependent for revenue on the sale of opium in China, as the people of England are dependent for their breakfasts and their evening meals on the produce of that empire; and thus both our domestic lives and our political greatness as a nation are now closely linked with (China) . . . the rebellion . . . can hardly fail . . . to extend that trade and social intercourse which are already uniting China with the civilized world . . . giving a common interest to all nations and preparing for them a common fate." *Economist*, April 30th, 1853.

in China itself,(1) it is evident that a death-blow is very likely to be struck at once at the business of opium-raising in India, the Indian revenue, and the commercial resources of Hindostan. Though this blow would not immediately be felt by the interests concerned, it would operate effectually in due time, and would come in to intensify and prolong the universal financial crisis whose horoscope we have cast above.

Since the commencement of the eighteenth century there has been no serious revolution in Europe which had not been preceded by a commercial and financial crisis. This applies no less to the revolution of 1789 than to that of 1848. It is true, not only that we every day behold more threatening symptoms of conflict between the ruling powers and their subjects, between the State and society, between the various classes; but also the conflict of the existing powers among each other gradually reaching that height where the sword must be drawn, and the *ultima ratio* of princes be recurred to. In the European capitals, every day brings despatches big with universal war, vanishing under the despatches of the following day, bearing the assurance of peace for a week or so. We may be sure, nevertheless, that to whatever height the conflict between the European powers may rise, however threatening the aspect of the diplomatic horizon may appear, whatever movements may be attempted by some enthusiastic fraction in this or that country, the rage of princes and the fury of the people are alike enervated by the breath of prosperity. Neither wars nor revolutions are likely to put Europe by the ears, unless in consequence of a general commercial and industrial crisis, the signal of which has, as usual, to be given by England, the representative of European industry in the market of the world.

It is unnecessary to dwell on the political consequences such a crisis must produce in these times, with the unprecedented extension of factories in England, with the utter dissolution of her official parties,(2) with the whole State machinery of

(1) In face of the "formidable rebellion which is now successfully rolling forward from the Canton provinces towards Peking" the Emperor was said to be legalizing the production of opium for the sake of revenue. (*Economist* May 21st, 1853). But this was only done after the Second Opium War, cf. p. 66[2].

(2) After the repeal of the Corn Laws by a Tory Prime Minister (1846) neither Whigs nor Tories could find a stable party basis. Marx had described the situation in his *Tribune* articles of Aug. 21, 25, Sep. 11, Nov. 9, 12, 1852. Cf. Nos. 3. 4. A new phase began in 1859 (p. xxi).

France transformed into one immense swindling and stock-jobbing concern,[1] with Austria on the eve of bankruptcy, with wrongs everywhere accumulated to be revenged by the people, with the conflicting interests of the reactionary powers themselves, and with the Russian dream of conquest once more revealed to the world.

[1] France under the Emperor Napoleon III. Cf. Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire*, 1852.

2. [THE CASE OF THE LORCHA 'ARROW']

New York Daily Tribune, Jan. 23, 1857[1]

THE MAILS of the America which reached us yesterday morning bring a variety of documents concerning the British quarrel with the Chinese authorities at Canton, and the warlike operations of Admiral Seymour. The result which a careful study of the official correspondence between the British and Chinese authorities at Hong-Kong and Canton must, we think, produce upon every impartial mind, is that the British are in the wrong in the whole proceeding. The alleged cause of the quarrel, as stated by the latter, is that instead of appealing to the British Consul, certain Chinese officers had violently removed some Chinese criminals from a lorcha[2] lying in Canton river, and hauled down the British flag which was flying from its mast. But, as says the London *Times*, "there are, indeed, matters in dispute, such as whether the lorcha . . . was carrying British colours, and whether the Consul was entirely justified in the steps that he took."[3] The doubt thus admitted is confirmed when we remember that the provision of the treaty, which the Consul insists should be applied to this lorcha, relates to British ships alone; while the lorcha, as it abundantly appears, was not in any just sense British. But in order that our readers may have the whole case before them, we proceed to give what is important in the official correspondence.[4] First, we have a communication dated Oct. 21, from Mr. Parkes, the British Consul at Canton, to Governor-General Yeh,[5] as follows :—

(1) As leading article without title. Editor's opening.

(2) Lorcha. A small coasting vessel, Chinese rigged with a hull of European type, originally Portuguese.

(3) *The Times* January 2, 1857.

(4) From the *Despatches of Rear Admiral Sir Michael Seymour*, published in the *London Gazette* Jan. 6th, (*The Times* Jan. 7th, 1857) and later as a Parliamentary paper (*Papers relating to the Proceedings of H.M. Naval Forces at Canton.* 1857). Quotations below are from the same source.

(5) Consul Parkes became Sir Harry Smith Parkes, Ambassador to China. Governor Yeh died in exile in 1860, having been sent as a prisoner to Calcutta after the capture of Canton.

"On the morning of the 8th inst. the British lorcha Arrow, when lying among the shipping anchored before the city, was boarded, without any previous reference being made to the British Consul, by a large force of Chinese officers and soldiers in uniform, who, in the face of the remonstrance of her master, an Englishman, seized, bound and carried away twelve Chinese out of her crew of fourteen, and hauled down her colours.

"I reported all the particulars of this public insult to the British flag, and grave violation of the ninth article of the Supplementary Treaty, to your Excellency the same day, and appealed to you to afford satisfaction for the insult, and cause the provisions of the treaty to be in this case faithfully observed.

"But your Excellency, with a strange disregard both to justice and treaty engagement, has offered no reparation or apology for the injury, and, by retaining the men you have seized in your custody, signify your approval of this violation of the treaty, and leave her Majesty's Government without any assurance that similar aggressions shall not again occur."

It seems that the Chinese on board the lorcha were seized by the Chinese officers because the latter had been informed that some of the crew had participated in a piracy committed against a Chinese merchantman. The British Consul accuses the Chinese Governor-General of seizing the crew, of hauling down the British flag, of declining to offer any apology, and of retaining the men seized in his custody. The Chinese Governor, in a letter addressed to Admiral Seymour, affirms that, having ascertained that nine of the captives were innocent, he directed, on Oct. 10, an officer to put them on board of their vessel again, but that Consul Parkes refused to receive them. As to the lorcha itself, he states that when the Chinese on board were seized, she was supposed to be a Chinese vessel, and rightly so, because she was built by a Chinese, and belonged to a Chinese, who had fraudulently obtained possession of a British ensign, by entering his vessel on the colonial British register—a method, it seems, habitual with Chinese smugglers. As to the question of the insult to the flag, the Governor remarks:

"It has been the invariable rule with lorchas of your Excellency's nation, to haul down their ensign when they

drop anchor, and to hoist it again when they get under way.

"When the lorcha was boarded, in order that the prisoners might be seized, it has been satisfactorily proved that no flag was flying. How then could a flag have been hauled down? Yet Consul Parkes, in one despatch after another, pretends that satisfaction is required for this insult offered to the flag."

From these premises the Chinese Governor concludes that no breach of any treaty has been committed. On Oct. 12, nevertheless, the British Plenipotentiary demanded not only the surrender of the whole of the arrested crew, but also an apology. The Governor thus replies:

"Early on the morning of Oct. 22, I wrote to Consul Parkes, and at the same time forwarded to him twelve men, namely, Leong Ming-tai and Leong Kee-fu, convicted on the inquiry I had instituted, and the witness, Wu-A-jin, together with nine previously tendered. But Mr. Consul Parkes would neither receive the twelve prisoners nor my letter."

Parkes might, therefore, have now got back the whole of his twelve men, together with what was most probably an apology, contained in a letter which he did not open. In the evening of the same day, Governor Yeh again made inquiry why the prisoners tendered by him were not received, and why he received no answer to his letter. No notice was taken of this step, but on the 24th fire was opened on the forts, and several of them were taken; and it was not until Nov. 1 that Admiral Seymour explained the apparently incomprehensible conduct of Consul Parkes in a message to the Governor. The men, he says, had been restored to the Consul, but "not *publicly* restored to their vessel, nor had the required apology been made for the violation of the Consular jurisdiction." To this quibble, then, of not restoring in state a set of men numbering three convicted criminals, the whole case is reduced. To this the Governor of Canton answers, first, that the twelve men had been actually handed over to the Consul, and that there had not been "any refusal to return the men to their vessel." What was still the matter with this British Consul, the Chinese Governor only learned after the city had been bombarded for six days. As to an apology, Governor Yeh insists that none could be given, as no fault had been committed. We quote his words:

"No foreign flag was seen by my executive at the time of the capture, and as, in addition to this, it was ascertained on the examination of the prisoners by the officer deputed to conduct it, that the lorcha was in no respect a foreign vessel, I maintain that there was no mistake committed."

Indeed, the force of this Chinaman's dialectics disposes so effectually of the whole question—and there is no other apparent case—that Admiral Seymour at last has no resource left him but a declaration like the following:

"I must positively decline any further argument on the merits of the case of the lorcha Arrow. I am perfectly satisfied of the facts as represented to your Excellency by Mr. Consul Parkes."

But after having taken the forts, breached the walls of the city, and bombarded Canton for six days, the Admiral suddenly discovers quite a new object for his measures, as we find him writing to the Chinese Governor on Oct. 30:

"It is now for your Excellency, by immediate consultation with me, to terminate a condition of things of which the present evil is not slight, but which, if not amended, can scarcely fail to be productive of the most serious calamities."

The Chinese Governor answers that according to the Convention of 1849, he had no right to ask for such a consultation. He further says:

"In reference to the admission into the city,[1] I must observe that, in April 1849, his Excellency the Plenipotentiary Bonham issued a public notice at the factories here, to the effect that he thereby prohibited foreigners from entering the city. The notice was inserted in the newspapers of the time, and will, I presume, have been read by your Excellency. Add to this that the exclusion of foreigners from the city is by the unanimous vote of the whole population of Kwangtong. It may be supposed how little to their liking has been this storming of the forts and this destruction of their dwellings; and, apprehensive as I am of the evil that may hence befall the officials and citizens of your Excellency's nation, I can suggest nothing better than a

[1] British traders had their warehouses and 'factories'—centres for factors or agents—along the river outside the city and their administration at Hongkong. The Nanking Treaty had conceded eventual right of entry into Canton, but successive British Governments had instructed representatives not to press this. Cf. pp. 15, 21, 22, 30, 31.

continued adherence to the policy of the Plenipotentiary Bonham, as to the correct course to be pursued. As to the consultation proposed by your Excellency, I have already, some days ago, deputed Tcheang, Prefect of Lei-chow-fu."

Admiral Seymour now makes a clean breast of it, declaring that he does not care for the Convention of Mr. Bonham:

"Your Excellency's reply refers me to the notification of the British Plenipotentiary of 1849, prohibiting foreigners from entering Canton. Now, I must remind you that, although we have indeed serious matter of complaint against the Chinese Government for breach of the promise given in 1847 to admit foreigners into Canton at the end of two years, my demand now made is in no way connected with former negotiations on the same subject, neither am I demanding admission of any but the foreign officials, and this only for the simple and sufficient reasons above assigned.

"On my proposal to treat personally with your Excellency, you do me the honour to remark that you sent a prefect some days ago. I am compelled therefore to regard your Excellency's whole letter as unsatisfactory in the extreme, and have only to add that, unless I immediately receive an explicit assurance of your assent to what I have proposed, I shall at once resume offensive operations."

Governor Yeh retorts by again entering into the details of the Convention of 1849:

"In 1848 there was a long controversial correspondence on the subject between my predecessor Leu and the British Plenipotentiary, Mr. Bonham, and Mr. Bonham being satisfied that an interview within the city was utterly out of the question, addressed a letter to Leu in the April of 1849, in which he said, 'At the present time I can have no more discussion with your Excellency on this subject.' He further issued a notice from the factories to the effect that no foreigner was to enter the city, which was inserted in the papers, and he communicated this to the British Government. There was not a Chinese or foreigner of any nation who did not know that the question was never to be discussed again."

Impatient of argument, the British Admiral hereupon forces his way into the City of Canton to the residence of the Governor, at the same time destroying the Imperial fleet in

the river. Thus there are two distinct acts in this diplomatic and military drama—the first introducing the bombardment of Canton on the pretext of a breach of the Treaty of 1842 committed by the Chinese Governor, and the second, continuing that bombardment on an enlarged scale, on the pretext that the Governor clung stubbornly to the Convention of 1849. First Canton is bombarded for breaking a treaty, and next it is bombarded for observing a treaty. Besides, it is not even pretended that redress was not given in the first instance, but only that redress was not given in the orthodox manner.

The view of the case put forth by the London *Times* would do no discredit even to General William Walker of Nicaragua.(1) " By this outbreak of hostilities," says that journal, " existing treaties are annulled, and we are left free to shape our relations with the Chinese Empire as we please . . . the recent proceedings at Canton warn us that we ought to enforce that right of free entrance into the country and into the ports open to us which was stipulated for by the Treaty of 1842. We must not again be told that our representatives must be excluded from the presence of the Chinese Governor-General, because *we have waived* the performance of the article which enabled foreigners to penetrate beyond the precincts of our factories."(2) In other words, " we " have commenced hostilities in order to break an existing treaty and to enforce a claim which " we " have waived by an express convention! We are happy to say, however, that another prominent organ of

(1) The American filibuster who, after leading a privately armed expedition which proclaimed the independence of Lower California and Sonora (Mexican states), and briefly reigning there, became by similar methods President of Nicaragua in 1856, he and his British friends being overthrown by Yankees in 1857. In China, remarked the *Tribune*, the English " with all their horror of *our* filibustering propensities " still retained " in common with ourselves, not a little of the old plundering, buccaneering spirit " of their common ancestors. (April 17, 1857.)

(2) *The Times* Jan. 2, 1857. Marx's italics. On Jan. 8th *The Times* declared: " We are . . . actually at war with China "; China must pay " ample indemnity "; " our honour and interest urge us to place our relations with the Chinese empire on a new footing ". In the interest " of humanity and civilization we ought not to let the matter drop " but " enforce the right of civilized nations to free commerce and communications with every part of this vast territory. There is no use in treating with such a power as if it belonged to the enlightened communities of Europe ".

British opinion expresses itself in a more humane and becoming tone. It is, says the *Daily News*, a " monstrous fact, that in order to avenge the irritated pride of a British official, and punish the folly of an Asiatic governor, we prostitute our strength to the wicked work of carrying fire and sword, and desolation and death, into the peaceful homes of unoffending men, on whose shores we were originally intruders. Whatever may be the issue of this Canton bombardment, the deed itself is a bad and a base one—a reckless and wanton waste of human life at the shrine of a false etiquette and a mistaken policy."(1)

It is, perhaps, a question whether the civilized nations of the world will approve this mode of invading a peaceful country, without previous declaration of war, for an alleged infringement of the fanciful code of diplomatic etiquette. If the first Chinese war, in spite of its infamous pretext, was patiently looked upon by other Powers, because it held out the prospect of opening the trade with China, is not this second war likely to obstruct that trade for an indefinite period ? Its first result must be the cutting off of Canton from the tea-growing districts, as yet, for the most part, in the hands of the imperialists—a circumstance which cannot profit anybody but the Russian overland tea-traders.

With regard to the reported destruction of a Chinese fort by the American frigate Portsmouth, we are not yet sufficiently informed to express a decided opinion.

(1) *Daily News* Jan. 2, 1857.

3. PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES ON THE CHINESE HOSTILITIES

New York Daily Tribune, March 16, 1857[1]

THE EARL of Derby's resolution, and that of Mr. Cobden, both of them passing condemnation upon the Chinese hostilities, were moved according to notices given, the one on the 24th February, in the House of Lords, the other on the 26th of February, in the House of Commons. The debates in the Lords ended on the same day when the debates in the Commons began. The former gave the Palmerston Cabinet a shock by leaving it in the comparatively weak majority of 36 votes. The latter may result in its defeat. But whatever interest may attach to the discussion in the Commons, the debates in the House of Lords[2] have exhausted the argumentative part of the controversy—the masterly speeches of Lords Derby and Lyndhurst forestalling the eloquence of Mr. Cobden, Sir E. Bulwer, Lord John Russell, and *tutti quanti*.

The only law authority on the part of the Government, the Lord Chancellor, remarked that " unless England had a good case with regard to the Arrow, all proceedings from the last to first were wrong." Derby and Lyndhurst proved beyond doubt that England had no case at all with regard to that lorcha.[3] The line of argument followed by them coincides so much with that taken up in the columns of *The Tribune* on the first publication of the English dispatches that I am able to condense it here into a very small compass.

What is the charge against the Chinese Government upon which the Canton massacres are pretended to rest? The infringement of Art. 9 of the Supplemental Treaty of 1843. That article prescribes that any Chinese offenders, being in the colony of Hong-Kong, or on board a British man-of-war,

[1] " Correspondence of the *N.Y. Tribune*, London, Feb. 27, 1857."

[2] Quotations are from *The Times* Feb. 25, 27, 1857; Marx also evidently consulted other papers.

[3] The Lord Chancellor was Lord Cranworth. Lord Lyndhurst, himself three times Lord Chancellor, said that he was in full agreement with Yeh's interpretation of the law.

or on board a British merchant ship, are not to be seized by the Chinese authorities themselves, but should be demanded from the British Consul, and by him be handed over to the native authorities. Chinese pirates were seized in the river of Canton on board the lorcha Arrow, by Chinese officers, without the intervention of the British Consul. The question arises, therefore, was the Arrow a British vessel? It was, as Lord Derby shows, " a vessel Chinese built, Chinese captured, Chinese sold, Chinese bought and manned, and Chinese owned." By what means, then, was this Chinese vessel converted into a British merchantman? By purchasing at Hong-Kong a British register or sailing licence. The legality of this register relies upon an ordinance of the local legislation of Hong-Kong, passed in March, 1855. That ordinance not only infringed the treaty existing between England and China, but annulled the law of England herself. It was, therefore, void and null. Some semblance of English legality it could but receive from the Merchant Shipping Act, which, however, was passed only two months after the issue of the ordinance. And even with the legal provisions of that Act it had never been brought into consonance. The ordinance, therefore, under which the lorcha Arrow received its register, was so much waste paper. But even according to this worthless paper the Arrow had forfeited its protection by the infringement of the provisions prescribed, and the expiration of its licence. This point is conceded by Sir J. Bowring himself. But then, it is said, whether or not the Arrow was an English vessel, it had, at all events, hoisted the English flag, and that flag was insulted. Firstly, if the flag was flying, it was not legally flying. But was it flying at all? On this point there exists discrepancy between the English and Chinese declarations. The latter have, however, been corroborated by depositions, forwarded by the Consuls, of the master and crew of the Portuguese lorcha No. 83. With reference to these depositions, *The Friend of China* of Nov. 13 states that " it is now notorious at Canton that the British flag had not been flying on board the lorcha for six days previous to its seizure."(1) Thus falls to the ground the punctilio of honour, together with the legal case.

(1) *The Overland Friend of China*, published in Victoria, Hongkong, where the views of the British commercial community were not always those of their Government. The issue quoted has not been traced.

Lord Derby had in this speech the good taste altogether to forbear from his habitual waggishness, and thus to give his argument a strictly judicial character. No efforts, however, on his part were wanted to impregnate his speech with a deep current of irony. The Earl of Derby, the chief of the hereditary aristocracy of England, pleading against the late Doctor, now Sir John Bowring, the pet disciple of Bentham;(1) pleading for humanity against the professional humanitarian; defending the real interests of nations against the systematic utilitarian insisting upon a punctilio of diplomatic etiquette; appealing to the " vox populi vox dei " against the greatest-benefit-of-the-greatest-number man; the descendant of the conquerors preaching peace where a member of the Peace Society preached red-hot shell; a Derby branding the acts of the British navy as " miserable proceedings " and " inglorious operations," where a Bowring congratulates it upon cowardly outrages which met with no resistance, upon " its brilliant achievements, unparalleled bravery, and splendid union of military skill and valour "—such contrasts were the more keenly satirical the less the Earl of Derby seemed to be aware of them. He had the advantage of that great historical irony which does not flow from the wit of individuals, but from the humour of situations. The whole Parliamentary history of England has, perhaps, never exhibited such an intellectual victory of the aristocrat over the parvenu.(2)

(1) (Sir) John Bowring, L.L.D. (1792-1872) appointed through his patron, Lord Palmerston, Consul at Canton (1847), and in 1854 the British Plenipotentiary in China. Descended from an old Devonshire woollen manufacturing family with a strong Puritan revolutionary tradition, he had been Jeremy Bentham's disciple and friend. From 1838 helped Cobden in the Anti-Corn-Law League. His statement that " Jesus Christ is Free Trade and Free Trade is Jesus Christ " is quoted in Marx's *Discourse on Free Trade*, 1847. In old age he wrote: " No man was ever a more ardent lover of peace than I, in fact I had been Secretary of the Peace Society . . . but with barbarous—aye, and sometimes civilized nations—the words of peace are uttered in vain . . . I look back with complacency on my government of Hongkong". (*Autobiographical Reflections*, 1877, p. 217).

(2) The 14th Earl of Derby (1799-1869), long remembered as "frank, haughty, rash, the Rupert of debate," as a translator of the *Iliad* and for his changes of politics. He was now leader of the much divided Tories. Prime Minister 1852, 1858-59, 1866-68. Of the speech referred to, a Liberal historian wrote a generation later that " few finer speeches have been made to the House of Lords ", quoting especially

Lord Derby declared at the outset that he " should have to rely upon statements and documents exclusively furnished by the very parties whose conduct he was about to impugn," and that he was content " to rest his case upon these documents." Now it has been justly remarked that those documents as laid before the public by the Government, would have allowed the latter to shift the whole responsibility upon its subordinates. So much is this the case that the attacks made by the parliamentary adversaries of the Government were exclusively directed to Bowring & Co., and could have been endorsed by the home Government itself, without at all impairing its own position. I quote from his Lordship:

" I do not wish to say anything disrespectful of Dr. Bowring. He may be a man of great attainments; but it appears to me that on the subject of his admission into Canton he is possessed with a perfect *monomania* (Hear, hear, and a laugh). I believe he dreams of his entrance into Canton. I believe he thinks of it the first thing in the morning, the last thing at night, and in the middle of the night, if he happen to be awake (a laugh). I do not believe that he would consider any sacrifice too great, any interruption of commerce to be deplored, any bloodshed almost to be regretted, when put in the scale with the immense advantage to be derived from the fact that Sir J. Bowring had obtained an official reception in the Yamun of Canton (Laughter)." Next came Lord Lyndhurst:

" Sir J. Bowring, who is a distinguished humanitarian as well as plenipotentiary (laughter), himself admits the register is void, and that the lorcha was not entitled to hoist the English flag. Now, mark what he says: ' The vessel had no protection, but the Chinese do not know this. For God's sake do not whisper it to them.' (Hear). He persevered, too,

the peroration appealing to law and morality (Herbert Paul: *A History of Modern England*, 1904 II, p. 70). Marx's description, however, exposes not only Benthamite Bowring but the clash between " aristocrat " and " parvenu ". The old governing caste were not enamoured of Free Trade mud and blood. When the Chinese began to defend themselves Derby justly declared that " the horrors " had been " the consequence and not, as Lord Palmerston would fain make them appear, the provocation to our acts." (Lord Malmesbury: *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, 1885, p. 397). But when he himself became Prime Minister in Feb. 1858 the China war was continued as before (p. xxi), and he later refused to support Lord Grey's attack on Palmerston (p. 98).

for he said in effect: We know the Chinese have not been guilty of any violation of treaty, but we will not tell them so; we will insist upon reparation and a return of the men they have seized in a particular form. If the men were not returned in the form, what was to be the remedy? Why, to seize a junk—a war junk. If that was not sufficient, seize more until we compelled them to submit, although we knew they had the right on their side and we had no justice on ours (Hear) . . . Was there ever conduct more abominable, more flagrant, in which—I will not say more fraudulent, but what is equal to fraud in our country—more false pretence has been put forward by a public man in the service of the British Government? (Hear) . . . It is extraordinary that Sir J. Bowring should think he had the power of declaring war. I can understand a man in such a position having necessarily a power of carrying on defensive operations, but to carry on offensive operations upon such a ground—upon such a pretence—is one of the most extraordinary proceedings to be found in the history of the world . . . It is quite clear from the papers laid on the table yesterday that from the first moment at which Sir J. Bowring was appointed to the station he now fills, his ambition was to procure what his predecessors had completely failed to effect—namely an entry within the walls of Canton . . . bent only upon carrying this object of gaining admission within the walls of Canton into execution, (he) has, for no necessary purpose whatever, plunged the country into war; and what is the result? Property, to the large amount of $1,500,000, belonging to British subjects, is now impounded in the city of Canton, and in addition to that our factories are burned to the ground, and all this is only owing to the mischievous policy of one of the most mischievous of men.

> " —— But man, proud man,
> Drest in a little brief authority,
> Most ignorant of what he's most assured,
> This glassy essence, like an angry ape,
> Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
> As make the angels weep."

And lastly, Lord Grey: (1)

" If your Lordships will refer to the papers, you will find

(1) Lord Grey. Cf. p. 30 and No. 17, p. 94[n].

that when Sir John Bowring applied for an interview with Commissioner Yeh, the Commissioner was ready to meet him, but he appointed for that purpose the house of the merchant Howqua, without the city . . . Sir John Bowring's dignity would not allow him to go anywhere but to the official residence of the Commissioner . . . I expect, if no other result, at least the good result from the adoption of the resolution—the instant recall of Sir J. Bowring."

Sir J. Bowring met with similar treatment at the hands of the Commons, and Mr. Cobden even opened his speech with a solemn repudiation of his " friend of twenty years' standing."(1)

The literal quotations from the speeches of Lords Derby, Lyndhurst and Grey prove that, to parry the attack, Lord Palmerston's Administration had only to drop Sir J. Bowring instead of identifying itself with that " distinguished humanitarian." That it owed this facility of escape neither to the indulgence nor the tactics of his adversaries, but exclusively to the papers laid before Parliament, will become evident from the slightest glance at the papers themselves as well as the debates founded upon them.

Can there remain any doubt as to Sir J. Bowring's " monomania " with respect to his entrance into Canton? It is not proved that that individual, as the London *Times* says, " has taken a course entirely out of his own head, without either advice from his superiors at home or any reference to their politics? "(2) Why, then, should Lord Palmerston, at a moment when his Government is tottering, when his way is beset with difficulties of all sorts—financial difficulties, Persian war difficulties, secret-treaty difficulties, electoral reform difficulties, coalition difficulties—when he is conscious that the eyes of the House are " upon him more earnestly but less admiringly than ever before," why should he single out just

(1) On Cobden's historic phrase in opening the House of Commons debate, *The Times* commented: " Of course he gives up his long-attached and long-respected friend, Sir John Bowring; he also gives up all our merchants, not only at Canton, but at Genoa, Leghorn, Trieste, Smyrna, Constantinople and even our own Liverpool." (Feb. 27, 1857).

(2) *The Times* Feb. 27. 1857. "It is simply the case of a Roman proconsul having his own quarrel with the Arabians or Parthians and taking his own measures accordingly." For government instructions cf. pp. 30, 31.

that moment to exhibit, for the first time in his political life, an unflinching fidelity to another man—and to a subaltern, too—at the hazard of not only impairing still more his own position, but of completely breaking it up? Why should he push his new-fangled enthusiasm to such a point as to offer himself as the expiatory sacrifice for the sins of a Dr. Bowring? Of course no man in his senses thinks the noble Viscount capable of any such romantic aberrations. The line of policy he has followed up in this Chinese difficulty affords conclusive evidence of the defective character of the papers he has laid before Parliament. Apart from published papers there must exist secret papers and secret instructions which would go far to show that if Dr. Bowring was possessed of the "monomania" of entering into Canton, there stood behind him the cool-headed chief of Whitehall working upon his monomania and driving it, for purposes of his own, from the state of latent warmth into that of consuming fire. (1)

(1) See below, pp. 30, 31, 83. *The Times* leading articles illustrate Palmerston's policy; for his close relation with that paper at this period, see *The History of the Times*, Vol. II, 1939. Although Bowring was publicly supported by Palmerston and his Press he was in fact superseded by the plenipotentiary Lord Elgin. Cf. p. 32n.

4. DEFEAT OF THE PALMERSTON MINISTRY

New York Daily Tribune, March 25, 1857[1]

AFTER HAVING raged for four nights, the Chinese debates subsided at last in a vote of censure passed by the House of Commons on the Palmerston Ministry. Palmerston retorts to the censure by a "penal dissolution."[2] He punishes the Commons by sending them home.

The immense excitement prevailing on the last night of the debates, within the walls of the House as well as among the masses who had gathered in the adjoining streets, was due not only to the greatness of the interests at stake, but still more to the character of the party on trial. Palmerston's administration was not that of an ordinary Cabinet. It was a dictatorship. Since the commencement of the war with Russia, Parliament had almost abdicated its constitutional functions; nor had it, after the conclusion of peace, ever dared to reassert them. By a gradual and almost imperceptible declension, it had reached the position of a Corps Legislatif, distinguished from the genuine, Bonapartish article by false pretences and high-sounding pretensions only. The mere formation of the Coalition Cabinet [3] denoted the fact that the old parties, on the friction of which the movement of the Parliamentary machine depends, had become extinct. This impotence of parties, first expressed by the Coalition Cabinet, the war helped to incarnate in the omnipotence of a single individual, who, during half a century of political life, had never belonged to any party, but always used all parties. If the war with Russia had not intervened, the very exhaustion of the old official parties would have led to transformation. New life would have been

[1] "From an Occasional Correspondent. London, March 6, 1857".

[2] House of Commons debate: Feb. 26, 27, March 2, 3, 1857, ending with Palmerston's defeat by 263 to 247 votes; he at once appealed to the country.

[3] The Coalition of Whigs and Peelites under Lord Aberdeen, 1852-55. Succeeded by Palmerston's (Whig) Ministry when a more vigorous prosecution of the Crimean war was being demanded.

poured into the Parliamentary body by the infusion of new blood, by the admission to political rights of at least some fractions of the masses of the people who are still deprived of votes and representatives. The war cut short this natural process. Preventing the neutralization of old Parliamentary antagonisms from turning to the benefit of the masses, the war turned it to the exclusive profit of a single man. Instead of the political emancipation of the British people, we have had the dictatorship of Palmerston.(1) War was the powerful engine by which this result was brought about, and war was the only means of insuring it. War had therefore become the vital condition of Palmerston's dictatorship. The Russian war was more popular with the British people than the Paris peace. Why, then, did the British Achilles, under whose auspices the Redan disgrace(2) and the Kars surrender(3) had occurred, not improve this opportunity? Evidently because the alternative lay beyond his control. Hence his Paris treaty, backed by his misunderstandings with the United States, his expedition to Naples, his ostensible squabbles with Bonaparte, his Persian invasion, and his Chinese massacres.

In passing a vote of censure upon the latter, the House of Commons cut off the means of his usurped power. Its vote was, therefore, not a simple Parliamentary vote, but a rebellion—a forcible attempt at the resumption of the constitutional attributes of Parliament.(4) This was the feeling which per-

(1) Marx's eight articles on Lord Palmerston had appeared in the *People's Paper*, Oct.-Dec., 1853. (reprinted as *The Life of Lord Palmerston*, 1899). The "dictatorship of Palmerston" reached its height in the years 1857, 1858. Cf. Introduction p. xiv.

(2) In the final assaults on Sebastopol (Aug-Sept. 1855) the British were repulsed at the Redan, the French gained the Malakov Tower.

(3) Famine and lack of aid forced the surrender of a key Turkish position, Kars (Armenia) in Nov. 1855, after five months' siege. Allied help was withheld from its British Commander, General Williams, because this would have involved fighting in Georgia, "Russia's Poland in the Caucasus", Britain's constant policy being to prevent any of the oppressed nationalities around Russia's frontiers from joining the war and transforming it into something revolutionary. Cf. four articles on Kars by Marx and Engels in the *People's Paper*, April 1856 (reprinted in *The Eastern Question*, 1897). Marx exposed the all too carefully edited Blue Book: *Affairs in Asiatic Turkey and the Defence and Capitulation of Kars*, 1856.

(4) Constitutional attributes Cf. Introduction p. xiv.

vaded the House, and whatever may have been the peculiar motives actuating the several fractions of the heterogeneous majority—composed of Derbyites, Peelites, Manchester men, Russellites, and so-called Independents—all of them were sincere in asserting that it was no vulgar anti-Ministerial conspiracy which united them in the same lobby. Such, however, was the gist of Palmerston's defence. He covered the weakness of his case by an argumentum ad misericordiam, by presenting himself as the victim of an unprincipled conspiracy. Nothing could be more happy than Mr. Disraeli's rebuke of this plea, so common to Old Bailey prisoners.

"The First Minister," he said, "is of all men the man who cannot bear a coalition. Why, sir, he is the arch-type of political coalitions without avowed principles. See how his Government is formed. It was only last year that every member of his Cabinet in this House supported a bill introduced, I think, by a late colleague. It was opposed in the other House by a member of the Government who, to excuse his apparent inconsistency, boldly declared that when he took office the First Minister required no pledge from him on any subject whatever (Laughter). Yet the noble Lord is alarmed and shocked at this unprincipled combination! The noble Lord cannot bear coalitions! The noble Lord has acted only with those among whom he was born and bred in politics (Cheers and laughter). That infant Hercules... (pointing at Lord Palmerston) was taken out of the Whig cradle, and how consistent has been his political life! (Renewed laughter). Looking back upon the last half century, during which he has professed almost every principle, and connected himself with almost every party, the noble Lord has raised a warning voice to-night against coalitions, because he fears that a majority of the House of Commons, ranking in its numbers some of the most eminent members of the House—men who have been colleagues of the noble Lord—may not approve a policy with respect to China which has begun in outrage, and which, if pursued, will end in ruin. (Loud cheers). That, sir, is the position of the noble Lord. And what defence of that policy have we had from the noble Lord? Has he laid down a single principle on which our relations with China ought to depend? Has he enumerated a solitary political maxim which should guide us in this moment of peril and

perplexity? On the contrary, he has covered a weak and shambling case by saying—what?—that he is the victim of a conspiracy. (Cheers and laughter). He did not enter into any manly or statesmanlike defence of his conduct. He reproduced petty observations made in the course of the debate which I thought really had become exhausted and obsolete, and then he turned round and said that the whole was a conspiracy! Accustomed to majorities which have been obtained without the assertion of a single principle, which have, indeed, been the consequence of an occasional position, and which have, in fact, originated in the noble Lord's sitting on that bench without the necessity of expressing an opinion upon any subject, foreign or domestic, that can interest the heart of the country or influence the opinion of the nation, the noble Lord will at last find that the time has come when, if he be a statesman, he must have a policy (cheers); and that it will not do, the instant that the blundering of his Cabinet is detected, and every man accustomed to influence the opinion of the House unites in condemning it, to complain to the country that he is the victim of a conspiracy." (Cheers). (1).

It would, however, be quite a mistake to presume that the debates were interesting because such passionate interests hinged upon them. There was one night's debate after another night's debate, and still no division. During the greater part of the battle the voices of the gladiators were drowned in the hum and hubbub of private conversation. Night after night the placemen spoke against time to win another twenty-four hours for intrigue and underground action. The first night Mr. Cobden made a clever speech. So did Bulwer and Lord John Russell; but the Attorney-General was certainly right in telling them that " he could not for one moment compare their deliberations or their arguments on such a subject as this with the arguments that had been delivered in another place." The second night was incumbered by the heavy special pleadings of the attorneys on both sides, the Lord-Advocate, Mr. Whiteside and the Attorney-General. Sir James Graham, indeed, made an attempt to raise the debate, but he failed. When this man, the virtual murderer of the Bandiera, sanctimoniously exclaimed that " he would wash his hands of

(1) *The Times*, March 4, 1857.

the innocent blood which had been shed," a half-suppressed ironical laugh re-echoed his pathos.(1) The third night was still duller. There was Sir F. Thesiger, the Attorney-General *in spe*, answering the Attorney-General *in re*, and Sergeant Shee endeavouring to answer Sir F. Thesiger. There was the agricultural eloquence of Sir John Pakington. There was General Williams of Kars, listened to with silence only for a few minutes, but after those few minutes spontaneously dropped by the House and fully understood not to be the man they had taken him for. There was, lastly, Sir Sidney Herbert. This elegant scion of Peelite statesmanship made a speech which was, indeed, terse, pointed, antithetical, but girding at the arguments of the placemen rather than producing new arguments of his own. But the last night the debate rose to a height compatible with the natural measure of the Commons. Roebuck, Gladstone, Palmerston and Disraeli were great, each in his own way.

The difficult point was to get rid of the stalking-horse of the debate, Sir J. Bowring, and to bring home the question to Lord Palmerston himself, by making him personally responsible for the " massacre of the innocents."(2) This was at last done. As the impending general election in England will in the main revolve upon this point, it may not be amiss to condense, in as short a compass as possible, the results of the discussion. The day after the defeat of the Ministry, and the day before the ministerial announcement of the dissolution of the House of Commons, the London *Times* ventured upon the following assertions:

> " the nation . . . will be rather at a loss to know the precise question to be answered . . . Has Lord Palmerston's

(1) In 1844, Sir James Graham, as Home Secretary, ordered that all letters sent to Mazzini, then a refugee in London, should be opened before delivery. Their contents were reported to the Austrian Government. By this means, it was generally believed, the brothers Bandiera, Italian officers in the Austrian army, had been betrayed; they were executed for their plan to liberate Naples. A widespread agitation followed, supported not only by leading Radicals (W. J. Linton, T. Duncombe etc.) but by Carlyle and Macaulay. However, after Secret Committees of Lords and Commons had disagreed on the issue the Home Secretary retained powers to open letters.

(2) See Summary of Events for the successive bombardments of Canton in 1856 and in 1857.

Cabinet forfeited the confidence of the people on account of a series of acts committed on the other side of the world six weeks before they were here even heard of, and by public servants appointed under a former administration ? " (It was at Christmas when Ministers heard of the matter, and they were at that time as ignorant as everybody else). " In fact, had the scene of the narrative been the moon, or had it been a chapter from the *Arabian Nights*, the present Cabinet could not have less to do with it . . . Is Lord Palmerston's administration to be condemned and displaced for what it never did and could not do, for what it only heard of when everybody else heard of it, for what was done by men whom it did not appoint and with whom it has not, as yet, been able to hold any communication ? "(1)

To this impudent rodomontade of a paper which has all along vindicated the Canton massacre as a supreme stroke of Palmerstonian diplomacy, we can oppose a few facts painfully elicited during a protracted debate, and not once controverted by Palmerston or his subordinates. In 1847, when at the head of the Foreign Office, Lord Palmerston's first dispatch on the admission of the British Hong-Kong authorities into Canton was couched in menacing terms. However, his ardours were damped by Earl Grey, his colleague, the then Secretary for the Colonies, who sent out a most peremptory prohibition to the officers commanding the naval forces, not only at Hong Kong, but at Ceylon, ordering them, under no circumstances, to allow any offensive movement against the Chinese without express authority from England. On the 18th August, 1849, however, shortly before his dismissal from the Russell Cabinet, Lord Palmerston wrote the following dispatch to the British Plenipotentiary at Hong-Kong:

" Let not the great officers of Canton nor the Government of Pekin deceive themselves . . . The forbearance which the British Government has hitherto displayed, arises not from a sense of weakness, but from consciousness of superior strength. The British Government well knows that if occasion required it, *British military force would be able to destroy the town of Canton, not leaving one single house standing,*

(1) *The Times*, March 5, 1857.

and could thus inflict the most signal chastisement upon the people of that city."(1)

Thus the bombardment of Canton occurring in 1856, under Lord Palmerston as Premier, was foreshadowed in 1849 by the last missive sent to Hong-Kong by Lord Palmerston, as Foreign Secretary of the Russell Cabinet. All the intervening Governments have refused to allow any relaxation of the prohibition put upon the British representatives at Hong-Kong against pressing their admission into Canton. This was the case with the Earl of Granville under the Russell Ministry, the Earl of Malmesbury under the Derby Ministry, and the Duke of Newcastle under the Aberdeen Ministry. At last, in 1852, Dr. Bowring, till then Consul at Canton, was appointed Plenipotentiary. His appointment, as Mr. Gladstone states, was made by Lord Clarendon, Palmerston's tool, without the knowledge or consent of the Aberdeen Cabinet.(2) When Bowring first mooted the question now at issue, Clarendon, in a dispatch dated July 5, 1854, told him that he was right, but that he should wait till there were naval forces available for his purpose. England was then at war with Russia. When the question of the Arrow arose, Bowring had just heard that peace had been established, and in fact naval forces were being sent out to him. Then the quarrel with Yeh was picked. On the 10th of January, after having received an account of all that had passed, Clarendon informed Bowring that " Her Majesty's Government entirely approved the course which has been adopted by Sir M. Seymour and yourself." This approbation, couched in these few words, was not accompanied by any further instructions. On the contrary, Mr. Hammond, writing to the Secretary of the Admiralty, was directed by Lord Clarendon to express to Admiral Seymour the Government's admiration of " the *moderation* with which he had acted, and the respect which he had shown for the lives and properties of the Chinese."

There can, then, exist no doubt that the Chinese massacre was planned by Lord Palmerston himself. Under what colours he now hopes to rally the electors of the United Kingdom is a question which I hope you will allow me to

(1) Quoted from Sir James Graham's speech in the debate. *The Times*, Feb. 27, 1857. Marx's italics.

(2) *The Times*, March 4, 1857.

answer in another letter, as this has already exceeded the proper limits.(1)

(1) Palmerston's appeal to the 'country' on the Chinese issue returned him with an increased majority; all the 'Peace Party' candidates, including Bright, Cobden and Milner Gibson, lost their seats. There had been no general election when Palmerston succeeded Lord Aberdeen as Prime Minister in 1855 during the Crimean War, and the conduct and policies of that war as well as the recent success in Persia (p. 45) were involved in his victory, which demonstrated that the old Manchester school of anti-Corn Law days no longer led the middle classes as a whole. (Marx's article on the defeat of Cobden, Bright and Gibson, dated March 31, appeared in the *Tribune* of April 17, 1857).

The polling period lasted a month but the borough results soon showed that Palmerston had won and before the new Parliament was in being instructions were being issued to the new Plenipotentiary, Lord Elgin, who had left England when the House assembled on April 30. (See Introduction, p. xii). With Palmerston's authority *The Times* announced on April 3 that the armament now being prepared for use against China would be twice as large as that employed in 1856; on April 8 it declared that " the country has . . . ratified the policy of the Minister, troops are ready for embarkation, gunboats are being fitted out with all despatch."

5. [RUSSIA AND CHINA]

New York Daily Tribune, April 7, 1857[1]

In the matter of trade and intercourse with China, of which Lord Palmerston and Louis Napoleon have undertaken the extension by force, no little jealousy is evidently felt of the position occupied by Russia. Indeed, it is quite possible that without any expenditure of money or exertion of military force Russia may gain more in the end, as a consequence of the pending quarrel with the Chinese, than either of the belligerent nations.

The relations of Russia to the Chinese Empire are altogether peculiar. While the English and ourselves—for in the matter of the pending hostilities the French are but little more than amateurs, as they really have no trade with China—are not allowed the privilege of a direct communication even with the Viceroy of Canton, the Russians enjoy the advantage of maintaining an Embassy at Peking. It is said, indeed, that this advantage is purchased only by submitting to allow Russia to be reckoned at the Celestial Court as one of the tributary dependencies of the Chinese Empire. Nevertheless it enables Russian diplomacy, as in Europe, to establish an influence for itself in China which is by no means limited to purely diplomatic operations. Being excluded from the maritime trade with China, the Russians are free from any interest or involvement in past or pending disputes on that subject; and they also escape that antipathy with which from time immemorial the Chinese have regarded all foreigners approaching their country by sea, confounding them, and not entirely without reason, with the piratical adventurers by whom the Chinese coasts seem ever to have been infested. But as an indemnity for this exclusion from the maritime trade, the Russians enjoy an inland and overland trade peculiar to themselves, and in which it seems impossible for them to have

[1] As leading article without title; probably revised editorially.

any rival. This traffic, regulated by a treaty made in 1787, during the reign of Catharine II., has for its principal, if not indeed its sole seat of operations, Kiachta, situate on the frontiers of southern Siberia and of Chinese Tartary, on a tributary of the Lake Baikal, and about a hundred miles south of the city of Irkutsk. This trade, conducted at a sort of annual fair, is managed by twelve factors, of whom six are Russians and six Chinese, who meet at Kiachta, and fix the rates—since the trade is entirely by barter—at which the merchandise supplied by either party shall be exchanged. The principal articles of trade are, on the part of the Chinese, tea, and on the part of the Russians, cotton and woollen cloths. This trade, of late years, seems to have attained a considerable increase. The quantity of tea sold to the Russians at Kiachta did not, ten or twelve years ago, exceed an average of forty thousand chests; but in 1852 it amounted to a hundred and seventy-five thousand chests, of which the larger part was of that superior quality well known to continental consumers as caravan tea, in contradistinction from the inferior article imported by sea. The other articles sold by the Chinese were some small quantities of sugar, cotton, raw silk and silk goods, but all to very limited amounts. The Russians paid about equally in cotton and woollen goods, with the addition of small quantities of Russian leather, wrought metals, furs and even opium. The whole amount of goods bought and sold—which seem in the published accounts to be stated at very moderate prices—reached the large sum of upward of fifteen millions of dollars. In 1853, owing to the internal troubles of China and the occupation of the road from the tea provinces by bands of marauding rebels, the quantity of tea sent to Kiachta fell off to fifty thousand chests, and the whole value of the trade of that year was but about six millions of dollars. In the two following years, however, this commerce revived, and the tea sent to Kiachta for the fair of 1855 did not fall short of a hundred and twelve thousand chests.

In consequence of the increase of this trade, Kiachta, which is situated within the Russian frontier, from a mere fort and fair-ground, has grown up into a considerable city. It has been selected as the capital of that part of the frontier region, and is to be dignified by having a military commandant and a civil governor. At the same time a direct and regular postal communication for the transmission of official dispatches has

lately been established between Kiachta and Peking, which is distant from it about nine hundred miles. (1)

It is evident that, should the pending hostilities result in a suppression of the maritime trade, Europe might receive its entire supply of tea by this route. Indeed, it is suggested that even with the maritime trade open, Russia may, upon the completion of her system of railroads, become a powerful competitor with the maritime nations for supplying the European markets with tea. These railroads will supply a direct communication between the ports of Cronstadt and Libau and the ancient city of Nijni Novgorod in the interior of Russia, the residence of the merchants by whom the trade at Kiachta is carried on. The supply of Europe with tea by this overland route is certainly more probable than the employment of our projected Pacific Railroad for that purpose. Silk, too, the other chief export of China, is an article of such small bulk in comparison to its cost, as to make its transportation by land by no means impossible; while this Chinese traffic opens an outlet for Russian manufactures, such as they cannot elsewhere attain.

We may observe, however, that the efforts of Russia are by no means limited to the development of this inland trade. It is several years since she took possession of the banks of the River Amur, the native country of the present ruling race in China. Her efforts in this direction received some check and interruption during the late war, but will doubtless be revived and pushed with energy. She has possession of the Kurile Islands and the neighbouring coasts of Kamchatka. Already she maintains a fleet in those seas, and will doubtless improve any opportunity that may offer to obtain a participation in the maritime trade with China.(2) This, however, is of little consequence to her compared with the extension of that overland trade of which she possesses the monopoly.

(1) On the development of Kiachta, Marx evidently got some though not all of his material from *China. Political, Commercial and Social in an Official Report to H.M. Government*, by R. Montgomery Martin, 1847, Vol. II, Chapter IX, " The Russian Settlement in Kiachta ", pp. 415-428. Kiachta, now in the Buriat-Mongolian Autonomous Republic of the U.S.S.R., was the main Russo-Chinese trade centre for about 150 years after 1727, when it was founded. Cf. p. 68.

(2) Russia's advance to the Pacific, 1846-60; see pp. 51, 74, XVI.

6. [WHOSE ATROCITIES?]

New York Daily Tribune, April 10, 1857[1]

A FEW years since, when the frightful system of torture in India was exposed in Parliament, Sir James Hogg, one of the Directors of the Most Honourable East India Company, boldly asserted that the statements made were unfounded. Subsequent investigation, however, proved them to be based upon facts which should have been well known to the Directors, and Sir James had left him to admit either " wilful ignorance " or " criminal knowledge " of the horrible charge laid at the Company's doors. Lord Palmerston, the present Premier of England, and the Earl of Clarendon, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, seem just now to be placed in a similar unenviable position. At the late Lord Mayor's banquet, the Premier said, in his speech, while attempting to justify the atrocities committed upon the Chinese:

> " If the Government had, in this case, approved of unjustifiable proceedings, they had undoubtedly followed a course which deserved to incur the censure of Parliament and of the country. We were persuaded, however, on the contrary, that these proceedings were necessary and vital. We felt that a great wrong had been inflicted on our country. We felt that our fellow countrymen in a distant part of the globe had been exposed to a series of insults, outrages and atrocities which could not be passed over in silence (Cheers). We felt that the treaty rights of this country had been broken, and that those locally charged with the defence of our interests in that quarter of the world were not only justified, but obliged to resent those outrages, so far as the power in their hands would enable them to do so. We felt

[1] As leading article without title. After the first sentence of the third paragraph this article becomes largely a summary of the facts already given about the Arrow case (No. 2), and seems to have been written from Marx's material by the *Tribune* editors, their general object being to press home the American non-intervention policy clearly expressed by themselves in the final paragraph. For American policy, see pp. XIX, XXI, 40, 41.

that we should be betraying the trust which the citizens of the country had reposed in us if we had not approved of the proceedings which we thought to be right, and which we, if placed in the same circumstances, should have deemed it our duty to have pursued (Cheers)."(1)

Now, however much the people of England and the world at large may be deceived by such plausible statements, his Lordship himself certainly does not believe them to be true, of if he does, he has betrayed a wilful ignorance almost as unjustifiable as "criminal knowledge." Ever since the first report reached us of English hostilities in China, the Government journals of England and a portion of the American Press have been heaping wholesale denunciations upon the Chinese —sweeping charges of violation of treaty obligations—insults to the English flag—degradation of foreigners residing on their soil, and the like; yet not one single distinct charge has been made or a single fact instanced in support of these denunciations, save the case of the lorcha Arrow, and, with respect to this case, the circumstances have been so misrepresented and glossed over by Parliamentary rhetoric as utterly to mislead those who really desire to understand the merits of the question.

The lorcha Arrow was a small Chinese vessel, manned by Chinese, but employed by some Englishmen. A licence to carry the English flag had been temporarily granted to her, which licence had expired prior to the alleged "insult". She is said to have been used to smuggle salt, and had on board of her some very bad characters—Chinese pirates and smugglers—whom, being old offenders against the laws, the authorities had long been trying to arrest. While lying at anchor in front of Canton—with sails furled, and no flag whatever displayed—the police became aware of the presence on board of these offenders, and arrested them—precisely such an act as would have taken place here had the police along our wharves known that river-thieves and smugglers were secreted in a native or foreign vessel near by. But, as this arrest interfered with the business of the owners, the captain went to the English Consul and complained. The Consul, a young man recently appointed, and, as we are informed, a

(1) From Palmerston's "Mansion House" speech at the banquet given to Ministers before the general election, reported in the London press, March 21, 1857.

person of a quick and irritable disposition, rushes on board *in propria persona*, gets into an excited parley with the police, who have only discharged their simple duty, and consequently fails in obtaining satisfaction. Thence he rushes back to the Consulate, writes an imperative demand for restitution and apology to the Governor-General of the Kwangtung Province, and a note to Sir John Bowring and Admiral Seymour at Hong Kong, representing that he and his country's flag have been insulted beyond endurance, and intimating in pretty broad terms that now is the time for a demonstration against Canton, such as had long been waited for.

Gov. Yeh politely and calmly responds to the arrogant demands of the excited young British Consul. He states the reason of the arrest, and regrets that there should have been any misunderstanding in the matter; at the same time he unqualifiedly denies the slightest intention of insulting the English flag, and sends back the men, whom, although lawfully arrested, he desired not to detain at the expense of so serious a misunderstanding. But this is not satisfactory to Mr. Consul Parkes—he must have an official apology, and a more formal restitution, or Gov. Yeh must abide the consequences. Next arrives Admiral Seymour with the British fleet, and then commences another correspondence, dogmatic and threatening on the side of the Admiral; cool, unimpassioned, polite, on the side of the Chinese official. Admiral Seymour demands a personal interview within the walls of Canton. Gov. Yeh says this is contrary to all precedent, and that Sir George Bonham had agreed that it should not be required. He would readily consent to an interview, as usual, outside the walled town if necessary, or meet the Admiral's wishes in any other way not contrary to Chinese usage and hereditary etiquette. But this did not suit the bellicose representative of British power in the East.

Upon the grounds thus briefly stated—and the official accounts now before the people of England fully bear out the statement—this most unrighteous war has been waged. The unoffending citizens and peaceful tradesmen of Canton have been slaughtered, their habitations battered to the ground, and the claims of humanity violated, on the flimsy pretence that " English life and property are endangered by the aggressive acts of the Chinese! " The British Government and the British people—at least, those who have chosen to examine the

question—know how false and hollow are such charges. An attempt has been made to divert investigation from the main issue, and to impress the public mind with the idea that a long series of injuries, preceding the case of the lorcha Arrow, form of themselves a sufficient *casus belli*. But these sweeping assertions are baseless. The Chinese have at least ninety-nine injuries to complain of to one on the part of the English.

How silent is the press of England upon the outrageous violations of the treaty daily practiced by foreigners living in China under British protection! We hear nothing of the illicit opium trade, which yearly feeds the British treasury at the expense of human life and morality. We hear nothing of the constant bribery of sub-officials, by means of which the Chinese Government is defrauded of its rightful revenue on incoming and outgoing merchandise. We hear nothing of the wrongs inflicted "even unto death" upon misguided and bonded emigrants sold to worse than Slavery on the coast of Peru, and into Cuban bondage. We hear nothing of the bullying spirit often exercised against the timid nature of the Chinese, or of the vice introduced by foreigners at the ports open to their trade. We hear nothing of all this and of much more, first, because the majority of people out of China care little about the social and moral condition of that country; and secondly, because it is the part of policy and prudence not to agitate topics where no pecuniary advantage would result. Thus, the English people at home, who look no further than the grocer's where they buy their tea, are prepared to swallow all the misrepresentations which the Ministry and the Press choose to thrust down the public throat.

Meanwhile, in China, the smothered fires of hatred kindled against the English during the opium war have burst into a flame of animosity which no tenders of peace and friendship will be very likely to quench. For the sake of Christian and commercial intercourse with China, it is in the highest degree desirable that we should keep out of this quarrel, and that the Chinese should not be led to regard all the nations of the Western World as united in a conspiracy against them.

7. [SOME OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE]

New York Daily Tribune, June 2, 1857[1]

AMONG THE papers relating to China which Lord Palmerston has laid before Parliament, we find some extracts from the correspondence between our Dr. Parker and Mr. Commissioner Yeh, in which we must say that our Doctor seems to come off second best.[2] Thus, the Doctor wrote to complain of the bread-poisoning at Hong Kong[3] to which Yeh replied as follows:

> "I received your Excellency's communication of the 16th ult. on the 2nd inst., and observe what it contains: That the American Consul, who had arrived at Macao from Hong Kong, informed you personally that two or three days before, certain Chinese people in Hong Kong had mixed poison in the bread which they furnished the public, without distinction of country, of which all had

[1] As leading article without title.

[2] Dr. Peter Parker, U.S. Commissioner in China (legation at Macao).

[3] For all quotations see *Further Papers relating to the Proceedings of H.M. Naval Forces at Canton* (Dec. 27, 1856—April 28, 1857) (1857). Dr. Peter Parker was drawn into this affair by Sir J. Bowring, who in January 1857 announced to the Foreign Office as a plot the news of the poisoned bread. Very many Chinese working people, as well as the family of Sir J. Bowring, were made ill by bread containing arsenic. Nobody died. "We shall not crouch before assassination and incendiaries" Bowring assured his friends (*Liverpool Courier*, Feb. 24, 1857). "The rumour is," he told the Foreign Office, "that a rising was intended had the attempt been successful. The analysis . . . shows arsenic in very large quantity and it is imagined that the excess of the poison rendered it inefficient by causing its early ejection from the stomach." Despite Sir J. Bowring's extraordinary attempts to incriminate the baker, Ah Lum, he and his fellow prisoners were acquitted (April 1857) by the English jury after a five-day trial on the capital charge of "administering poison with intent to kill", and though immediately re-arrested and kept in gaol had eventually to be released. Cf. "... *Papers connected with the confinement of Chinese Prisoners at Hongkong and with the Trial of a Baker and others on the Charge of Poisoning*," published for Parliament after the present article and the later reference by Engels on p. 48 were written. (1857, XLIII).

eaten, and had been made seriously ill, and that it was not yet known whether they would survive.

"On reading this, I was very greatly surprised. The Chinese and Americans have usually been on good terms, and the trade between China and other countries has heretofore been conducted amicably; but the English have now, for several months, in a most unprovoked manner, brought their troops and engaged in hostilities, and repeatedly setting fire to the shops and dwellings of people, and destroying a very great number of buildings, and have ruined some entire families. Doubtless there are many Chinese whose hatred against the English has been much increased by this; but to poison people in this underhand manner is an act worthy of detestation: still, as it all occurred in Hong Kong it is impossible for me to examine into all the facts. The act is owing to the unnumbered evils which have been inflicted upon the Chinese by the English; and the natives of the surrounding districts have taken this way of revenging their private wrongs.

"The Americans having never injured the Chinese, there is, of course, nothing to mar the good feeling existing between them. *Your Excellency might with propriety, issue admonitory exhortations for the Americans quietly to attend to their own business, and there can be no question but the Chinese will always treat them in a proper manner.* What could induce them to think of secretly poisoning them ?—a point worthy of your consideration. For this I reply—at the same time wishing you stable peace."

Nothing could be better put than the suggestion we have placed in italics, that Dr. Parker and his countrymen would do much better to mind their own business than to be mixing themselves up in the quarrel which the English had picked.

Instead, however, of falling in with this piece of good advice, Dr. Parker must needs write a letter to Yeh, in which he undertakes to justify himself and the American authorities for siding with the English.(1) Of this letter the following is an extract:

"Were the undersigned called upon to pass judgment upon the question who is right and who is wrong in the

(1) Dr. Parker had later to resign his office as Commissioner when the United States Government disowned his pledge to Bowring of American co-operation in case of hostilities.

present controversy, he might wish to inquire if it had not been right, when the occasion for serious complaint arose, for the high officers of the two Governments to have met face to face, and according to reason and justice have settled the matter, and thus have prevented the vast destruction of property and effusion of blood which have been in consequence of your Excellency's failing to do so. He might, also, perchance, inquire into the truth of the statements regarding what had transpired in former years in relation to the subject of the entree of the City of Canton, which differs widely from what the undersigned, who has long resided in China, apprehends to be the facts of the case.

" The undersigned may be allowed, in the spirit of true friendship, to express to your Excellency his belief that the fountain of all difficulties between China and foreign nations is the unwillingness of China to acknowledge England, France, America and other great nations of the West as her equals and true friends, and treat them accordingly. So far as respects this grave matter the American Government is sensible that the English are in the right, and does choose to cooperate with them."

Yeh's answer is not given, but it can hardly be supposed that he failed to make the retort to which the Doctor had exposed himself. The Doctor knows perfectly well, nobody better, that the true cause of the present and former difficulties between the Chinese and the English was and is, not as he pretends " the unwillingness of China to acknowledge England, France, America and other great nations of the West as her equals," but the unwillingness of the Chinese authorities to allow their subjects to be poisoned with opium for the pecuniary benefit of the British East India Company and a few unprincipled British, American and French traders. How is it possible for the Chinese to regard these " great nations of the West " " as their true friends, and to treat them accordingly," when they find that the principal business of these great nations in China has been and is to sell and spread the use of opium, a poisonous drug introduced by these foreigners within a century past—before which time it was utterly unknown to the Chinese—and the use of which increases with a frightful rapidity, fatal at once to the morals, the pecuniary welfare and the health of the Flowery Empire? When these " great nations " shall have first proved them-

selves " true friends " by joining with the Chinese authorities to put an end to this wicked traffic, it will be quite time to complain that the Chinese are unwilling to recognize them in that character.

Other Chinese officials seem not inferior to Yeh in the matter of diplomatic correspondence. On the 9th of December [1856] Sir John Bowring sent to the Viceroy of Fukien, etc., a statement of his complaints against Yeh, requesting that the Court of Pekin be advised of the same. In his reply the Viceroy says:

" The document forwarded to me being in English, its contents are unknown to me, and I have no means of deciphering them.

" In conclusion, it is my duty to add that our two nations having been on friendly terms for many years, I am still in hopes that by due observance on either side of the Treaty of Peace that was to last for ever, it will be their good fortune to strengthen the amicable relations heretofore existing between them."

The Viceroy of another province, to whom a similar letter was sent, replied as follows:

" I rejoice in your Excellency's professions of peace; but it would only do harm to the interests of peace, to which you profess yourself so friendly, were I to tell the Emperor that, because of Yeh's act, you have precipitately broken the peace that the Treaty said was to last for ever. Another reason against my addressing the throne is, that Yeh, and he alone, is competent to deal with commercial questions; and this can be nothing else, being a question with foreigners."

The following Imperial edict of the 27th December [1856] does not evince any present disposition on the part of the Emperor to give way to the demands of the English:

" We have this day instructed Yeh, that if the English barbarians turn from their present course of their own motion, anger (or hate) need not be carried to extremity; but if they dare to persist in their extravagance and obstinacy, peace is not to be negotiated by a conciliatory movement on our part, as this would open the way to demands for other concessions of importance. Yeh-ming-chin has been very long in charge of the Kwang provinces, and is so thoroughly cognizant with barbarian affairs that

he will be able in all probability to devise a proper course of proceeding.

"It occurs to us that the seaboard of Kiangsu, Chekiang and Fukien, is ground with which the steamers of these barbarians are, by long experience, well acquainted, and as precaution should be taken to defend (that coast) also against the barbarians, who, when they find themselves unable to work their will in the Canton province, may attempt to disturb other ports along it, we command Eleang, Chaou, and Ilo, to give instruction privily to the local authorities, in the event of barbarian ships approaching (their jurisdiction), to take such steps as will render them secure, without sound or sign (that may attract attention). If they come to explain the circumstances of the rupture at Canton, they must be so silenced by reasonable arguments that no loop-hole be left them; and seeing this, they may be minded to fall back from their undertaking as hopeless. But (the authorities referred to) are not in any way to take the alarm, as this would disturb and perplex the public mind."

8. PERSIA—CHINA

New York Daily Tribune, June 5, 1857[1]

THE ENGLISH have just concluded an Asiatic war, and are entering upon another. The resistance offered by the Persians,[2] and that which the Chinese have so far opposed to British invasion, form a contrast worth our attention. In Persia, the European system of military organization has been engrafted upon Asiatic barbarity; in China, the rotting semi-civilization of the oldest State in the world meets the Europeans with its own resources. Persia has been signally defeated, while distracted, half-dissolved China has hit upon a system of resistance which, if followed up, will render impossible a repetition of the triumphal marches of the first Anglo-Chinese war.

Persia was in a state similar to that of Turkey during the war of 1828-9 against Russia. English, French, Russian officers had in turns tried their hands at the organization of the Persian army. One system had succeeded another, and each in its turn had been thwarted by the jealousy, the intrigues, the ignorance, the cupidity and corruption of the Orientals whom it was to form into European officers and soldiers. The new regular army had never had an opportunity of trying its organization and strength in the field. Its only exploits had been confined to a few campaigns against Kurds, Turcomans and Afghans, where it served as a sort of nucleus or reserve to

[1] " From our own Correspondent. London, May 22, 1857 ". This article was written by Engels. (Cf. Marx—Engels *Gesamtausgabe* Abt. 3 Bd. II ss. 179, 190, 191, 195).

[2] The Persian war (Dec. 1856-March 1857) an outcome of the Crimean war, was an incident in the long story of Russo-British imperialist intrigues in Persia and Afghanistan—around the Persian Gulf and the north-western frontiers of India. Inspired by Russia, Persia broke a Treaty of 1853 by besieging Herat, nominally part of Afghanistan, practically independent. Britain declared war, took Bushire and routed the Persians at Khooshab and Mohammerah. Peace was signed on March 4, 1857. Accounts of the fighting were published in Britain towards the end of April. Articles by Marx on the war and the Treaty appeared in the *Tribune* Jan. 7, Feb. 14, June 24. 1857. Cf. p. 75 f.

the numerous irregular cavalry of Persia. The latter did most of the actual fighting; the regulars had generally but to impose upon the enemy by the demonstrative effect of their seemingly formidable arrays. At last, the war with England broke out.

The English attacked Bushire, and met with a gallant though ineffective resistance. But the men who fought at Bushire were not regulars; they were composed of the irregular levies of the Persian and Arab inhabitants of the coast. The regulars were only concentrating, some sixty miles off, in the hills. At last they advanced. The Anglo-Indian army met them half way; and, though the Persians used their artillery with credit to themselves, and formed their squares on the most approved principles, a single charge of one single Indian cavalry regiment swept the whole Persian army, guards and line, from the field. And to know what these Indian regular cavalry are considered to be worth in their own service, we have only to refer to Capt. Nolan's book on the subject.(1) They are, among Anglo-Indian officers, considered worse than useless, and far inferior to the irregular Anglo-Indian cavalry. Not a single action can Capt. Nolan find where they were creditably engaged. And yet, these were the men, six hundred of whom drove ten thousand Persians before them! Such was the terror spread among the Persian regulars that never since have they made a stand anywhere—the artillery alone excepted. At Mohammerah, they kept out of harm's way, leaving the artillery to defend the batteries, and retired as soon as these were silenced; and when, on a reconnaissance, the British landed three hundred riflemen and fifty irregular horse, the whole of the Persian host marched off, leaving baggage, stores and guns in the possession of the—victors you cannot call them—the invaders.

All this, however, neither brands the Persians as a nation

(1) *Cavalry; its History and Tactics*, by Captain L. E. Nolan (15th Hussars) 1853; pp. 71, 88-89, 100-120, 127-154. Nolan argued that English "regular" cavalry training and equipment were inferior to that of Sikh "irregulars", of Cossacks and Circassians, and of "Asiatic" cavalry in general. (The '40's and '50's had brought experiences of wars in Afghanistan, the Punjab, Russia, Turkey, India and Persia). Engels was writing when a discussion was taking place on the new rifled musket; "poor Nolan" overvalued the cavalry arm, said one correspondent to *The Times*, pointing out that the new musket and "conical bullet" would give superiority to the infantry. (April 24, 1857).

of cowards, nor condemns the introduction of European tactics among Orientals. The Russo-Turkish wars of 1809-12 and 1828-9 offer plenty of such examples. The principal resistance offered to the Russians was made by the irregular levies both from the fortified towns and from the mountain provinces. The regulars, wherever they showed themselves in the open field, were at once upset by the Russians, and very often ran away at the first shot; while a single company of Arnaut irregulars, in a ravine at Varna, successfully opposed the Russian siege operations for weeks together. Yet, during the late war the Turkish regular army have defeated the Russians in every single engagement from Oltenitza and Citate to Kars and to Ingur.

The fact is that the introduction of European military organization with barbaric nations is far from being completed when the new army has been subdivided, equipped and drilled after the European fashion. That is merely the first step towards it. Nor will the enactment of some European military code suffice; it will no more ensure European discipline than a European set of drill-regulations will produce, by itself, European tactics and strategy. The main point, and at the same time the main difficulty, is the creation of a body of officers and sergeants, educated on the modern European system, totally freed from the old national prejudices and reminiscences in military matters, and fit to inspire life into the new formation. This requires a long time, and is sure to meet with the most obstinate opposition from Oriental ignorance, impatience, prejudice, and the vicissitudes of fortune and favour inherent to Eastern courts. A Sultan or Shah is but too apt to consider his army equal to anything as soon as the men can defile in parade, wheel, deploy and form column without getting into hopeless disorder. And as to military schools, their fruits are so slow in ripening that under the instabilities of Eastern Governments they can scarcely ever be expected to show any. Even in Turkey, the supply of educated officers is but scanty, and the Turkish army could not have done at all, during the late war, without the great number of renegades and the European officers in its ranks.

The only arm which everywhere forms an exception is the artillery. Here the Orientals are so much at fault and so helpless that they have to leave the whole management to their European instructors. The consequence is that, as in

Turkey so in Persia, the artillery was far ahead of the infantry and cavalry.

That under these circumstances the Anglo-Indian army, the oldest of all Eastern armies organized on the European system, the only one that is subject not to an Eastern, but an exclusively European government, and officered almost entirely by Europeans—that this army, supported by a strong reserve of British troops and a powerful navy, should easily disperse the Persian regulars, is but a matter of course. The reverse will do the Persians the more good the more signal it was. They will now see, as the Turks have seen before, that European dress and parade-drill is no talisman in itself, and, maybe, twenty years hence, the Persians will turn out as respectable as the Turks did in their late victories.

The troops which conquered Bushire and Mohammerah will, it is understood, be at once sent to China. There they will find a different enemy. No attempts at European evolutions, but the irregular array of Asiatic masses, will oppose them there. Of these they no doubt will easily dispose; but what if the Chinese wage against them a national war, and if barbarism be unscrupulous enough to use the only weapons which it knows how to wield ?

There is evidently a different spirit among the Chinese now to what they showed in the war of 1840 to '42. Then, the people were quiet; they left the Emperor's soldiers to fight the invaders, and submitted after a defeat with Eastern fatalism to the power of the enemy. But now, at least in the southern provinces, to which the contest has so far been confined, the mass of the people take an active, nay, a fanatical part in the struggle against the foreigners. They poison the bread of the European community at Hong Kong by wholesale, and with the coolest premeditation. (A few loaves have been sent to Liebig for examination. He found large quantities of arsenic pervading all parts of them, showing that it had already been worked into the dough. The dose, however, was so strong that it must have acted as an emetic, and thereby counteracted the effects of the poison).(1) They go with hidden arms on board trading steamers, and, when on the journey, massacre the crew and European passengers and seize the boat.(2)

(1) See Note 3, p. 40.

(2) Referring to the incident on the mail steamer Thistle. (p. xx).

They kidnap and kill every foreigner within their reach.(1) The very coolies emigrating to foreign countries rise in mutiny, and as if by concert, on board every emigrant ship, and fight for its possession, and, rather than surrender, go down to the bottom with it, or perish in its flames. Even out of China, the Chinese colonists, the most submissive and meek of subjects hitherto, conspire and suddenly rise in nightly insurrection, as at Sarawak; or, as at Singapore, are held down by main force and vigilance only. The piratical policy of the British Government has caused this universal outbreak of all Chinese against all foreigners, and marked it as a war of extermination.(2)

What is an army to do against a people resorting to such means of warfare? Where, how far, is it to penetrate into the enemy's country, how to maintain itself there? Civilization-mongers who throw hot shells on a defenceless city(3) and add rape to murder, may call the system cowardly, barbarous, atrocious; but what matters it to the Chinese if it be only

(1) The kidnapping of Chinese labourers for British and American ships is referred to on p. 11.

(2) Cf. *The Times* April 25th, 1857: "The Chinese *vendetta* has spread through the Archipelago. Some time since, Singapore . . . was threatened with ruin by an insurrection of the hordes of Chinese who inhabit it. Now we hear that Sarawak, the settlement of Sir James Brooke in Borneo, has been destroyed . . . Sir James Brooke only saved his life by swimming across a creek . . ." Enlisting Dyaks, Malays, Europeans, " he avenged the destruction by the slaughter of 2,000 Chinese ". The thousands of Chinese in Singapore, Malaya, the East Indies and Australia " are by this time thoroughly roused to a war of extermination against us. Poison, fire and the knife are prepared for us by thousands of barbarian fanatics . . . nothing is left but to punish the outrages of this faithless race by . . . the whole strength of the Empire . . . " With peace in Persia and the [supposed] end of the Indian Mutiny, " and our arsenals and ports choked with warlike stores and ships, there is every facility for carrying through the Chinese war with promptitude and success ". On the Chinese revolt in Sarawak Sir James Brooke reported that " out of a population of 4,000 to 5,000 certainly not more than 2,000 have escaped." *Annual Register*, 1857 [336-37]. He was eager to extend " the kingdom of Christ." *Times*, Sept. 28, 29, 1858.

(3) *Civilization-mongers . . . hot shell . . .* "Let your Excellency well remember that without any injury done to the English by the people of Canton, your Excellency fired at once into the city, and ask yourself whether this consists with the forms of war as waged by a great State, or whether this is the practice of civilization?" (Yeh to Admiral Seymour, Nov. 11th 1856, source quoted p. 11). The British fired " carcasses (incendiary bombs) and fire-balls " into Canton.

successful? Since the British treat them as barbarians, they cannot deny to them the full benefit of their barbarism. If their kidnappings, surprises, midnight massacres are what we call cowardly, the civilization-mongers should not forget that according to their own showing they could not stand against European means of destruction with their ordinary means of warfare.

In short, instead of moralizing on the horrible atrocities of the Chinese, as the chivalrous English press does, we had better recognize that this is a war *pro aris et focis*, a popular war for the maintenance of Chinese nationality, with all its overbearing prejudice, stupidity, learned ignorance and pedantic barbarism if you like, but yet a popular war. And in a popular war the means used by the insurgent nation cannot be measured by the commonly recognized rules of regular warfare, nor by any other abstract standard, but by the degree of civilization only attained by that insurgent nation.

The English are this time placed in a difficult position. Thus far, the national Chinese fanaticism seems to extend no farther than over those southern provinces which have not adhered to the great rebellion.[1] Is the war to be confined to these? Then it would certainly lead to no result, no vital point of the empire being menaced. At the same time, it would be a very dangerous war for the English if the fanaticism extends to the people of the interior. Canton may be totally destroyed and the coasts nibbled at in all possible points, but all the forces the British could bring together would not suffice to conquer and hold the two provinces of Kwangtung and Kwang-si. What, then, can they do further? The country north of Canton, as far as Shanghai and Nanking, is in the hands of the Chinese insurgents, whom it would be bad policy to offend; and north of Nanking the only point of attack on which might lead to a decisive result is Peking. But where is the army to form a fortified and garrisoned base of operations on the shore, to overcome every obstacle on the road, to leave detachments to secure the communications with the shore, and to appear in anything like formidable strength before the walls of a town the size of London, a hundred miles from its landing place? On the other side, a successful demon-

[1] The Taiping rebellion (pp. XIX, XXII) which was constantly engaging the Chinese Imperialist forces and was not directed against the foreigners.

stration against the capital would shake to its ground-works the very existence of the Chinese Empire—accelerate the upsetting of the Manchu dynasty and pave the way, not for British, but for Russian progress.

The new Anglo-Chinese war presents so many complications that it is utterly impossible to guess the turn it may take. For some months the want of troops, and for a still longer time the want of decision, will keep the British pretty inactive except, perhaps, on some unimportant point, to which under actual circumstances Canton too may be said to belong.

One thing is certain, that the death-hour of Old China is rapidly drawing nigh. Civil war has already divided the South from the North of the Empire, and the Rebel King seems to be as secure from the Imperialists (if not from the intrigues of his own followers) at Nanking, as the Heavenly Emperor from the rebels at Peking. Canton carries on, so far, a sort of independent war with the English, and all foreigners in general; and while British and French fleets and troops flock to Hong Kong, slowly but steadily the Siberian-line Cossacks advance their stanitzas from the Daurian mountains to the banks of the Amur, and the Russian marines close in by fortifications the splendid harbours of Manchuria.[1] The very fanaticism of the southern Chinese in their struggle against foreigners seems to mark a consciousness of the supreme danger in which Old China is placed; and before many years pass away we shall have to witness the death struggles of the oldest empire in the world, and the opening day of a new era for all Asia.

[1] Cf. Note 2, p. 35. From 1851 onwards Russian settlers east of Lake Baikal had to accept liability for military duties as a condition of landholding; i.e., they became Cossacks; in 1854, 6,000 Cossacks were ordered to migrate from the Trans-Baikal settlements to the Manchurian frontiers. The 'Daurian' mountains (the Yablonoi range) lie east of Lake Baikal and west of the Amur. Russia's advance to the Pacific was made without war while the Imperial Chinese Government was occupied with other foes.

9. [TRADE OR OPIUM?]

New York Daily Tribune, September 20, 1858[1]

THE NEWS of the new treaty wrung from China by the allied Plenipotentiaries[2] has, it would appear, conjured up the same wild vistas of an immense extension of trade which danced before the eyes of the commercial mind in 1845, after the conclusion of the first Chinese war. Supposing the Petersburg wires to have spoken truth, is it quite certain that an increase of the Chinese trade must follow upon the multiplication of its emporiums? Is there any probability that the war of 1857-8 will lead to more splendid results than the war of 1839-42? So much is certain that the treaty of 1842, instead of increasing American and English exports to China, proved instrumental only in precipitating and aggravating the commercial crisis of 1847. In a similar way, by raising dreams of an inexhaustible market and by fostering false speculations, the present treaty may help preparing a new crisis at the very moment when the market of the world is but slowly recovering from the recent universal shock.[3] Besides its negative result, the first opium-war succeeded in stimulating the opium trade at the expense of legitimate commerce, and so will this second opium-war do if England be not forced by the general pressure of the civilized world to abandon the compulsory opium cultivation in India and the armed opium propaganda to China. We forbear dwelling on the morality of that trade, described by Montgomery Martin, himself an Englishman, in the following terms:

> "Why, the 'slave trade' was merciful compared with the 'opium trade'. We did not destroy the bodies of the

(1) As leading article without title. In August Marx sent two articles on China to the *Tribune*, one (August 27) on the Peace Treaty. Neither was published.

(2) The Treaty of Tientsin, signed in June. First news had arrived but full details were not known. See p. 60[2], 65.

(3) The first world economic crisis. In Britain (Nov. 1857) the Bank Act had been suspended. Marx, who returned to his theoretical work at this time, mentions the suspension in a note to the *Critique of Political Economy* (1859) Kerr edition p. 259. On the effects of the 1842 Treaty cf. p. 60.

Africans, for it was our immediate interest to keep them alive; we did not *debase their natures, corrupt their minds, nor destroy their souls.* But the opium seller slays the body after he has corrupted, degraded and annihilated the moral being of unhappy sinners, while every hour is bringing new victims to a Moloch which knows no satiety, and where the English murderer and Chinese suicide vie with each other in offerings at his shrine."(1)

The Chinese cannot take both goods and drug; under actual circumstances, extension of the Chinese trade resolves into extension of the opium trade; the growth of the latter is incompatible with the development of legitimate commerce—these propositions were pretty generally admitted two years ago. A Committee of the House of Commons, appointed in 1847 to take into consideration the state of British commercial intercourse with China, reported thus:

We regret " that the trade with that country has been for some time in a very unsatisfactory condition, and that the *result of our extended intercourse has by no means realized the just expectations* which had naturally been founded on a *freer access to so magnificent a market.* . . . We find that the difficulties of the trade do not arise from any want of demand in China for articles, of British manufacture or from the increasing competition of other nations. . . . *The payment for opium* . . . absorbs the silver to the great inconvenience of the general traffic of the Chinese; and tea and silk must in fact pay the rest,"(2)

(1) R. Montgomery Martin, op. cit II p. 261. See above, p. 35n. Montgomery Martin's great indictment of the opium trade, " a national crime ", was drawn from Chinese and British sources. Martin, author of works on Ireland, India and on all parts of the British Empire, was appointed (1844) Treasurer to the diplomatic and consular services in China and member of the Hongkong Legislative Council, but had to resign (1845) because of his opposition to the development of Hongkong and to the opium trade. A devout Christian, he sincerely desired that Britain by extending commerce, should extend Christian virtue. " Is Christianity a name or a principle?" " We stand convicted before the nations of the world ". Britain, now on the threshold of China, whose inhabitants comprised a third of the human race, had infinite opportunities for good or ill. He hopefully dedicated his account of China to Queen Victoria and had some of his reports printed at his own expense. Marx evidently also studied the official: *Papers relating to the Opium Trade in China* 1842-1856. (1857)

(2) *Select Committee on Commercial Relations with China. Report and Minutes of Evidence, July* 1847, pp. iii, iv. Marx's italics.

The Friend of China, of July 28, 1849, generalizing the same proposition, says in set terms:

> " The opium trade progresses steadily. The increased consumption of teas and silk in Great Britain and the United States would merely result in the increase of the opium trade; the case of the manufacturers is hopeless."(1)

One of the leading American merchants in China reduced, in an article inserted in Hunt's *Merchants' Magazine*, for January, 1850, the whole question of the trade with China to this point: " Which branch of commerce is to be suppressed, the opium trade or the export trade of American or English produce?" The Chinese themselves took exactly the same view of the case. Montgomery Martin narrates: " I inquired of the Taoutai at Shanghai which would be the best means of increasing our commerce with China, and his first answer to me, in the presence of Capt. Balfour, Her Majesty's Consul, was: ' Cease to send us so much opium, and we will be able to take your manufactures.' "(2)

The history of general commerce during the last eight years has, in a new and striking manner, illustrated these positions; but, before analysing the deleterious effects on legitimate commerce of the opium trade, we propose giving a short review of the rise and progress of that stupendous traffic which, whether we regard the tragical collisions forming, so to say, the axis round which it turns, or the effects produced by it on the general relations of the Eastern and Western worlds, stands solitary on record in the annals of mankind. Previous to 1767 the quantity of opium exported from India did not exceed 200 chests, the chest weighing about 133lbs. Opium was legally admitted in China on the payment of a duty of about $3 per chest, as a medicine; the Portuguese, who brought it from Turkey, being its almost exclusive importers into the Celestial Empire. In 1773, Colonel Watson and Vice-President Wheeler—persons deserving to take a place among the Hermentiers, Palmers and other poisoners of world-wide fame—suggested to the East India Company the idea of entering upon the opium traffic with China. Consequently, there was established a depot for opium in vessels anchored in a bay to the southwest of Macao. The speculation proved a failure. In 1781 the Bengal Govern-

(1) *The Overland Friend of China*, cf. p. 19[n]
(2) Quotation not traced.

ment sent an armed vessel, laden with opium, to China; and, in 1794, the Company stationed a large opium vessel at Whampoa, the anchorage for the port of Canton. It seems that Whampoa proved a more convenient depot than Macao, because, only two years after its selection, the Chinese Government found it necessary to pass a law which threatened Chinese smugglers of opium to be beaten with a bamboo and exposed in the streets with wooden collars around their necks. About 1798, the East India Company ceased to be direct exporters of opium, but they became its producers. The opium monopoly was established in India; while the Company's own ships were hypocritically forbidden from trafficking in the drug, the licences it granted for private ships trading to China containing a provision which attached a penalty to them if freighted with opium of other than the Company's own make. In 1800, the import into China had reached the number of 2,000 chests. Having, during the eighteenth century, borne the aspect common to all feuds between the foreign merchant and the national custom-house, the struggle between the East India Company and the Celestial Empire assumed, since the beginning of the nineteenth century, features quite distinct and exceptional; while the Chinese Emperor, in order to check the suicide of his people, prohibited at once the import of the poison by the foreigner, and its consumption by the natives, the East India Company was rapidly converting the cultivation of opium in India, and its contraband sale to China, into internal parts of its own financial system.

While the semi-barbarian stood on the principle of morality, the civilized opposed to him the principle of self. That a giant empire, containing almost one-third of the human race, vegetating in the teeth of time, insulated by the forced exclusion of general intercourse, and thus contriving to dupe itself with delusions of Celestial perfection—that such an empire should at last be overtaken by fate on [the] occasion of a deadly duel, in which the representative of the antiquated world appears prompted by ethical motives, while the representative of overwhelming modern society fights for the privilege of buying in the cheapest and selling in the dearest markets—this, indeed, is a sort of tragical couplet stranger than any poet would ever have dared to fancy.

10. [FREE TRADE AND MONOPOLY]

New York Daily Tribune, September 25, 1858[1]

It was the assumption of the opium monopoly in India by the British Government which led to the proscription of the opium trade in China. The cruel punishments inflicted by the Celestial legislator upon his own contumacious subjects, and the stringent prohibition established at the Chinese custom-houses proved alike nugatory. The next effect of the moral resistance of the Chinaman was the demoralization, by the Englishman, of the Imperial authorities, custom-house officers and mandarins generally. The corruption that ate into the heart of the Celestial bureaucracy, and destroyed the bulwark of the patriarchal constitution, was, together with the opium chests, smuggled into the Empire from the English storeships anchored at Whampoa.

Nurtured by the East India Company, vainly combated by the Central Government at Pekin, the opium trade gradually assumed larger proportions, until it absorbed about $2,500,000 in 1816. The throwing open in that year of the Indian commerce, with the single exception of the tea trade, which still continued to be monopolized by the East India Company, gave a new and powerful stimulus to the operations of the English contrabandists. In 1820, the number of chests smuggled into China had increased to 5,147; in 1821 to 7,000, and in 1824 to 12,639. Meanwhile, the Chinese Government, at the same time that it addressed threatening remonstrances to the foreign merchants, punished the Hong Kong merchants, known as their abettors, developed an unwonted activity in its prosecution of the native opium consumers, and, at its custom-houses, put into practice more stringent measures. The final result, like that of similar exertions in 1794, was to drive the opium depots from a precarious to a more convenient basis of operations. Macao and Whampoa were abandoned for the Island of Lin-Tin, at the entrance of the Canton River, there to become

(1) Printed as a leading article without title.

permanently established in vessels armed to the teeth, and well manned. In the same way, when the Chinese Government temporarily succeeded in stopping the operations of the old Canton houses, the trade only shifted hands, and passed to a lower class of men, prepared to carry it on at all hazards and by whatever means. Thanks to the greater facilities thus afforded, the opium trade increased during the ten years from 1824 to 1834 from 12,639 to 21,785 chests.

Like the years 1800, 1816 and 1824, the year 1834 marks an epoch in the history of the opium trade. The East India Company then lost not only its privilege of trading in Chinese tea, but had to discontinue and abstain from all commercial business whatever. It being thus transformed from a mercantile into a merely government establishment, the trade to China became completely thrown open to English private enterprise which pushed on with such vigour that, in 1837, 39,000 chests of opium, valued at $25,000,000, were successfully smuggled into China, despite the desperate resistance of the Celestial Government. Two facts here claim our attention: First, that of every step in the progress of the export trade of China since 1816, a disproportionately large part progressively fell upon the opium-smuggling branch; and secondly, that hand in hand with the gradual extinction of the ostensible mercantile interest of the Anglo-Indian Government in the opium trade grew the importance of its fiscal interest in that illicit traffic. In 1837 the Chinese Government had at last arrived at a point where decisive action could no longer be delayed. The continuous drain of silver, caused by the opium importations, had begun to derange the exchequer, as well as the moneyed circulation of the Celestial Empire. Heu Nailzi, one of the most distinguished Chinese statesmen, proposed to legalize the opium trade and make money out of it; but after a full deliberation, in which all the high officers of the Empire shared, and which extended over a period of more than a year's duration, the Chinese Government decided that, " On account of the injuries it inflicted on the people, the nefarious traffic should not be legalized." As early as 1830, a duty of 25 per cent would have yielded a revenue of $3,850,000. In 1837, it would have yielded double that sum, but then the Celestial barbarian declined, laying a tax sure to rise in proportion to the degradation of his people. In 1853, Hien Fang, the present Emperor, under still more distressed circumstances,

and with the full knowledge of the futility of all efforts at stopping the increasing import of opium, persevered in the stern policy of his ancestors. Let me remark, *en passant*, that by persecuting the opium consumption as a heresy the Emperor gave its traffic all the advantages of a religious propaganda. The extraordinary measures of the Chinese Government during the years 1837, 1838 and 1839, which culminated in Commissioner Lin's arrival at Canton, and the confiscation and destruction, by his orders, of the smuggled opium, afforded the pretext for the first Anglo-Chinese war, the results of which developed themselves in the Chinese rebellion, the utter exhaustion of the Imperial exchequer, the successful encroachment of Russia from the North, and the gigantic dimensions assumed by the opium trade in the South. Although proscribed in the treaty with which England terminated a war, commenced and carried on in its defence, the opium trade has practically enjoyed perfect impunity since 1843. The importation was estimated, in 1856, at about $35,000,000, while in the same year, the Anglo-Indian Government drew a revenue of $25,000,000, just the sixth part of its total State income, from the opium monopoly.(1) The pretexts on which the second opium war has been undertaken are of too recent date to need any commentary.

We cannot leave this part of the subject without singling out one flagrant self-contradiction of the Christianity-canting and civilization-mongering British Government. In its imperial capacity it affects to be a thorough stranger to the contraband opium trade, and even to enter into treaties proscribing it. Yet, in its Indian capacity, it forces the opium cultivation upon Bengal, to the great damage of the productive resources of that country; compels one part of the Indian ryots to engage in the poppy culture; entices another part into the same by dint of money advances; keeps the wholesale manufacture of the deleterious drug a close monopoly in its hands; watches by a whole army of official spies its growth, its delivery at appointed places, its inspissation and preparation for the taste of the Chinese consumers, its formation into packages especially adapted to the conveniency of smuggling, and finally its conveyance to Calcutta, where it is put up at auction at the Government sales, and made over by the State officers

(1) The opium revenue for 1855-56 was estimated at £5,000,000, or about a sixth of the whole Government revenue. Cf. pp. 2, 8.

to the speculators, thence to pass into the hands of the contrabandists who land it in China. The chest costing the British Government about 250 rupees is sold at the Calcutta auction mart at a price ranging from 1,210 to 1,600 rupees. But, not yet satisfied with this matter-of-fact complicity, the same Government, to this hour, enters into express profit and loss accounts with the merchants and shippers, who embark in the hazardous operation of poisoning an empire.

The Indian finances of the British Government have, in fact, been made to depend not only on the opium trade with China, but on the contraband character of that trade. Were the Chinese Government to legalize the opium trade simultaneously with tolerating the cultivation of the poppy in China, the Anglo-Indian exchequer would experience a serious catastrophe.(1) While openly preaching free trade in poison, it secretly defends the monopoly of its manufacture. Whenever we look closely into the nature of British free trade, monopoly is pretty generally found to lie at the bottom of its " freedom."

(1) India. Cf. p. 8, Note 2.

11. [TRADE AND THE TREATY]

New York Daily Tribune, October 5, 1858(1)

The unsuccessful issue, in a commercial point of view, of Sir Henry Pottinger's Chinese treaty, signed on August 29, 1842,(2) and dictated, like the new treaties with China, at the cannon's mouth, is a fact now recollected even by that eminent organ of British Free Trade, the London *Economist.*(3) Having stood forward as one of the staunchest apologists of the late invasion of China, that journal now feels itself obliged to " temper " the sanguine hopes which have been cultivated in other quarters. The *Economist* considers the effects on the British export trade of the treaty of 1842, " a precedent by which to guard ourselves against the result of mistaken operations." This certainly is sound advice. The reasons, however, which Mr. Wilson(4) alleges in explanation of the failure of the first attempt at forcibly enlarging the Chinese market for Western produce, appear far from conclusive.

The first great cause pointed out of the signal failure is the speculative overstocking of the Chinese market, during the first three years following the Pottinger treaty, and the carelessness of the English merchants as to the nature of the Chinese demand. The English exports to China which, in 1836, amounted to £1,326,000, had fallen in 1842 to £969,000.

(1) As a leading article without title.

(2) The Treaty of Nanking after the First Opium War.

(3) *Economist*, Sept. 4 1858: " The Commercial Effects of the Treaty with China. The Export Trade." ' Telegraphic news ' of the contents of the Treaty of Tientsin (signed June 1858 but unratified) had arrived via Russia (cf. p. 52) and it could be assumed " that the Chinese authorities have yielded all Lord Elgin's demands and that nearly the whole of China will be, in the words of the French report, open to ' the labour and industry of Europe.'"

(4) James Wilson (1805-1860). Anti-Corn Law Leaguer and Free Trader; founder (1843), first editor and chief proprietor of the *Economist.* Held various Government offices, ending in India (p. 79).

Their rapid and continued rise during the following six years is shown by these figures:

1842	£969,000	1844	£2,305,000
1843	1,456,000	1845	2,295,000

Yet in 1846 the exports did not only sink below the level of 1836, but the disasters overtaking the China houses at London during the crisis of 1847 proved the *computed* value of the exports from 1843 to 1846, such as it appears in the official return tables, to have by no means corresponded to the value actually *realized*. If the English exporters thus erred in the quantity, they did not less so in the quality of the articles offered to Chinese consumption. In proof of the latter assertion, the *Economist* quotes from Mr. W. Cooke, the late correspondent of the London *Times* at Shanghai and Canton,(1) the following passages:

> "In 1843, 1844 and 1845, when the northern ports had just been opened, the people at home were wild with excitement. An eminent firm at Sheffield sent out a large consignment of knives and forks, and declared themselves prepared to supply all China with cutlery. . . They were sold at prices which scarcely realized their freight. A London house, of famous name, sent out a tremendous consignment of pianofortes, 'which shared the same fate.' What happened in the case of cutlery and pianos occurred also, in a less noticeable manner, 'in the case of worsted and cotton manufactures.'...Manchester made a great *blind* effort when the ports were opened, and that effort failed. Since then she has fallen into an apathy, and trusts to the chapter of accidents."

Lastly, to prove the dependence of the reduction, maintenance or improvement of the trade, on the study of the wants of the consumer, the *Economist* reproduces from the same authority the following return for the year 1856:

	1845.	1846.	1856.
Worsted Stuffs (pieces)	13,569	3,415	7,428
Camlets	13,374	8,034	4,470
Long ells	91,531	75,784	96,642
Woollens	62,731	56,996	38,553
Printed Cottons	100,615	81,150	281,784
Plain Cottons	2,998,126	1,859,740	2,817,624
Cotton Twist, lbs.	2,640,098	5,324,050	5,579,600

Now all these arguments and illustrations explain nothing

(1) George Wingrove Cooke. *Economist*, Sept. 4, 1858.

beyond the reaction following the overtrade of 1843-45. It is a phenomenon by no means peculiar to the Chinese trade, that a sudden expansion of commerce should be followed by its violent contractions, or that a new market, at its opening, should be choked by British oversupplies; the articles thrown upon it being not very nicely calculated, in regard either to the actual wants or the paying powers of the consumers. In fact, this is a standing feature in the history of the markets of the world. On Napoleon's fall, after the opening of the European continent, British exports proved so disproportionate to the continental faculties of absorption that " the transition from war to peace " proved more disastrous than the continental system itself. Canning's recognition of the independence of the Spanish colonies in America was also instrumental in producing the commercial crisis of 1825. Wares calculated for the meridian of Moscow were then dispatched to Mexico and Colombia. And in our own day, notwithstanding its elasticity, even Australia has not escaped the fate common to all new markets, of having its powers of consumption as well as its means of payment over-stocked. The phenomenon peculiar to the Chinese market is this: that since its opening by the treaty of 1842, the export to Great Britain of tea and silk, of Chinese produce, has continually been expanding, while the import trade into China of British manufactures has, on the whole, remained stationary. The continuous and increasing balance of trade in favour of China might be said to bear an analogy to the state of commercial balance between Russia and Great Britain; but then, in the latter case, everything is explained by the protective policy of Russia, while the Chinese import duties are lower than those of any other country England trades with. The aggregate value of Chinese exports to England, which before 1842 might be rated at about £7,000,000, amounted in 1856 to the sum of about £9,500,000. While the quantity of tea imported into Great Britain never reached more than 50,000,000 lbs. before 1842, it had swollen in 1856 to about 90,000,000 lbs. On the other hand, the importance of the British import of Chinese silks only dates from 1852. Its progress may be computed from the following figures:

	1852.	1853.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Silk imp'd lb	2,418,343	2,838,047	4,576,706	4,436,962	3,723,693
Value ....£	....	....	3,318,112	3,013,396	3,676,116

Now take, on the other hand, the movement of the

BRITISH EXPORTS TO CHINA VALUED IN POUNDS STERLING.

1834	£842,852	1836	£1,326,388
1835	1,074,708	1838	1,204,356

For the period following the opening of the market in 1842 and the acquisition of Hong Kong by the British, we find the following returns:

1845	£2,359,000	1853	£1,749,597
1846	1,200,000	1854	1,000,716
1848	1,445,950	1855	1,122,241
1852	2,508,599	1856, upward of	2,000,000

The *Economist* tries to account for the stationary and relatively decreasing imports of British manufacture into the Chinese market by foreign competition, and Mr. Cooke is again quoted to bear witness to this proposition. According to this authority, the English are beaten by fair competition in the Chinese market in many branches of trade. The Americans, he says, beat the English in drills and sheetings. At Shanghai in 1856 the imports were 221,716 pieces of American drills, against 8,745 English, and 14,420 of American sheetings, against 1,240 English. In woollen goods, on the other hand, Germany and Russia are said to press hardly on their English rivals. We want no other proof than this illustration to convince us that Mr. Cooke and the *Economist* are both mistaken in the appreciation of the Chinese market. They consider as limited to the Anglo-Chinese trade features which are exactly reproduced in the trade between the United States and the Celestial Empire. In 1837, the excess of the Chinese exports to the United States over the imports into China was about £860,000. During the period since the treaty of 1842, the United States have received an annual average of £2,000,000 in Chinese produce, for which we paid in American merchandise £900,000. Of the £1,602,849 to which the aggregate imports into Shanghai, exclusive of specie and opium, amounted in 1855, England supplied £1,122,241, America £272,708, and other countries £207,900; while the exports reached a total of £12,603,540, of which £6,405,040 were to England, £5,396,406 to America, and £102,088 to other countries. Compare only the American exports to the value of £272,708 with their imports from Shanghai exceeding £5,000,000. If, nevertheless, American competition has, to any sensible degree, made inroads on British traffic, how limited a field of employment for the

aggregate commerce of foreign nations the Chinese market must offer.

The last cause assigned to the trifling importance the Chinese import market has assumed since its opening in 1842, is the Chinese revolution, but notwithstanding that revolution, the exports to China relatively [swelled] in 1851-52, in the general increase of trade, and, during the whole of the revolutionary epoch, the opium trade, instead of falling off, rapidly obtained colossal dimensions. However that may be, this much will be admitted, that all the obstacles to foreign imports originating in the disordered state of the empire must be increased, instead of being diminished, by the late piratical war, and the fresh humiliations heaped on the ruling dynasty.

It appears to us, after a careful survey of the history of Chinese commerce, that, generally speaking, the consuming and paying powers of the Celestials have been greatly overestimated. With the present economical framework of Chinese society, which turns upon diminutive agriculture and domestic manufactures as its pivots, any large import of foreign produce is out of the question. Still, to the amount of £8,000,000, a sum which may be roughly calculated to form the aggregate balance in favour of China, as against England and the United States, it might gradually absorb a surplus quantity of English and American goods if the opium trade were suppressed. This conclusion is necessarily arrived at on the analysis of the simple fact that the Chinese finances and monetary circulation, in spite of the favourable balance of trade, are seriously deranged by an import of opium to the amount of about £7,000,000.

John Bull, however, used to plume himself on his high standard of morality, prefers to bring up his adverse balance of trade by periodical war tributes extorted from China on piratical pretexts. He only forgets that the Carthegenian and Roman methods of making foreign people pay, are, if combined in the same hands, sure to clash with and destroy each other.

12. THE BRITISH AND CHINESE TREATY

New York Daily Tribune, October 15, 1858(1)

The official summary of the Anglo-Chinese treaty, which the British Ministry has at last laid before the public, adds, on the whole, but little to the information that had already been conveyed through different other channels.(2) The first and the last articles comprise, in fact, the points in the treaty of exclusively English interest. By the first article, " the Supplementary Treaty and general regulations of trade," stipulated after the conclusion of the treaty of Nanking, are "abrogated." That supplementary treaty provided that the English Consuls residing at Hong Kong, and the five Chinese ports opened to British commerce, were to cooperate with the Chinese authorities in case any English vessels should arrive within the range of their consular jurisdiction with opium on board. A formal prohibition was thus laid upon English merchants to import the contraband drug, and the English Government, to some degree, constituted itself one of the Custom-House officers of the Celestial Empire. That the second opium war should end in removing the fetters by which the first opium war still affected to check the opium traffic, appears a result quite logical, and a consummation devoutly called for by that part of the British mercantile public which chanted most lusty applause to Palmerston's Canton fireworks. We are, however, much mistaken if this official abandonment on the part of England of her hypocritical opposition to the opium trade is not to lead to consequences quite the reverse of those expected. By engaging the British Government to cooperate in the suppression of the opium traffic, the Chinese Government had recognized its inability to do so on its own account.

(1) " Correspondence of the N.Y. Tribune. London, September 28, 1858."

(2) The full British official summary of the Treaty of Tientsin appeared in *The Times*, Sept. 27, 1858 and was discussed by the *Economist*, Oct. 2, 1858. Details partly from French sources were being discussed in the press of Sept. 15, 16, 17. It was supposed that the war was at an end (see Summary of Events p. xxii).

The Supplementary Treaty of Nanking was a supreme and rather desperate effort at getting rid of the opium trade by foreign aid. This effort having failed, and being now proclaimed a failure, the opium traffic, being now, so far as England is concerned, legalized, little doubt can remain that the Chinese Government will try a method alike recommended by political and financial considerations—viz: legalize the cultivation of the poppy in China, and lay duties on the foreign opium imported. Whatever may be the intentions of the present Chinese Government, the very circumstances in which it finds itself placed by the treaty of Tientsin, show all that way.

That change once effected, the opium monopoly of India, and with it the Indian Exchequer, must receive a deadly blow, while the British opium traffic will shrink to the dimensions of an ordinary trade, and very soon prove a losing one. Till now, it has been a game played by John Bull with loaded dice. To have baffled its own object seems, therefore, the most obvious result of the opium war No. II.(1)

Having declared "a just war" on Russia, generous England desisted, at the conclusion of peace, from demanding any indemnity for her war expenses. Having, on the other hand, all along professed to be at peace with China itself, she, accordingly, cannot but make it pay for expenses incurred, in the opinion of her own present Ministers, by piracy on her own part. However, the first tidings of the fifteen or twenty

(1) The opium trade was very quietly legalized that November through the Convention of Shanghai (p. xiii[n]), and despite Marx's expectations continued to benefit Britain and India.

Regarding the treatment of his articles by the *Tribune* Marx wrote to Engels (Dec. 17, 1858): "I have had one cause for satisfaction from the *Tribune*. For months this wretched paper has been printing all my articles on China as leaders (a full history of Anglo-Chinese trade, etc.) and even paying itself compliments on them (cf. No. 6). But when the *official* text of the Anglo-Chinese Treaty at last came to hand I wrote an article in which I said, among other things, that the Chinese 'would now legalize the import of opium, likewise lay an import duty on it, and lastly would probably allow the cultivation of the poppy in China itself,' so that the 'second opium war' would be sooner or later a deadly blow to the English opium trade and especially to the Indian Exchequer. Well, Mr. Dana prints this article as from an 'Occasional' Correspondent in London and himself writes a flimsy leading article in which he *refutes* his 'occasional' correspondent." Marx's prophecy, however, was confirmed and he wrote an article, not published, in which he "joked a little bit, of course in a restrained way, about my 'correctors'." (This letter contains some discrepancies).

millions of pounds sterling to be paid by the Celestials proved a quieter to the most scrupulous British conscience, and very pleasant calculations as to the beneficial effects of the Sycee silver upon the balance of trade, and the metal reserve of the Bank of England, were entered into by the *Economist* and the writers of money articles generally. But alas! the first impressions which the Palmerstonian press had given itself so much trouble to produce and work upon, were too tender to bear the shock of real information.

A " separate article provides that a sum of two millions of taels " shall be paid " on account of the losses sustained by British subjects through the misconduct of the Chinese authorities at Canton; and a further sum of two millions of taels on account of " the expenses of the war.[1]) Now, these sums together amount to £1,334,000 only, while in 1842, the Emperor of China had to pay £4,200,000, of which £1,200,000 was indemnity for the contraband opium confiscated, and £3,000,000 for the expenses of the war. To come down from £4,200,000, with Hong Kong into the bargain, to a simple £1,334,000, seems no thriving trade after all ; but the worst remains still to be said. Since, says the Chinese Emperor, yours was no war with China, but a " provincial war " with Canton only, try yourselves how to squeeze out of the province of Kwangtung the damages which your amiable war steamers have compelled me to adjudge to you. Meanwhile, your illustrious Gen. Straubenzee[2]) may keep Canton as a material guaranty, and continue to make the British arms the laughing-stock even of Chinese braves. The doleful feelings of sanguine John Bull at these clauses, which the small booty of £1,334,000 is encumbered with, have already vented themselves in audible groans. " Instead," says one London paper, " of being able to withdraw our 53 ships-of-war, and see them return triumphant with millions of Sycee silver, we may look forward to the pleasing necessity of sending an army of 5,000 men to recapture and hold Canton, and to assist the fleet in carrying on that provincial war which the

(1) An indemnity had been claimed from Canton even from the time of the Arrow episode. The clause in the treaty aroused a few protests, e.g. the *Morning Star* objected to any indemnity, as the British, not the Chinese, were responsible for the war. (Sept. 17, 1853).

(2) General (Sir C. T.) van Straubenzee (1812-1892) commanded the British contingent in China 1857-60.

Consul's deputy has declared. But will this provincial war have no consequences beyond driving our Canton trade to other Chinese ports? . . . Will not the continuation of it [the provincial war] give Russia a large portion of the tea trade? May not the Continent, and England herself, become dependent on Russia and the United States for their tea?" John Bull's anxiety as to the effects of the "provincial war" upon the tea trade is not quite gratuitous. From Macgregor's Commercial Tariffs it may be seen that in the last year of the former Chinese war, Russia received 120,000 chests of tea at Kiachta.(1) The year after the conclusion of peace with China the Russian demand fell off 75 per cent, amounting to 30,000 only. At all events, the costs still to be incurred by the British in distraining Kwangtung are sure so to swell the wrong side of the balance that this second China war will hardly be self-paying, the greatest fault which, as Mr. Emerson justly remarks, anything can be guilty of in British estimation.

Another great success of the English invasion is contained in Art. 51, according to which the term "barbarian" "shall not be applied" to the British Government or to British subjects "in any Chinese official document issued by the Chinese authorities." The Chinese authorities styling themselves Celestials, how humble to their understanding must not appear John Bull, who, instead of insisting on being called divine or Olympian, contents himself with weeding the character representing the word barbarian out of the official documents.(2)

The commercial articles of the Treaty give England no advantage not to be enjoyed by her rivals, and, for the present, dissolve into shadowy promises, for the greater part not worth the parchment they are written on. Art. 10 stipulates: "British merchant ships shall have authority to trade upon the Great River (Yang-tse), but in the present disturbed state of the Upper and Lower Valley, no port is to be opened for trade with the exception of Chin-kiang, which is to be opened in a year from the signature of the Treaty. When peace is restored,

(1) John Macgregor: *Commercial Statistics, a Digest.* 1843-1850. Vol. II, p. 647; cf. ibid. p. 504.

(2) Chinese official documents and correspondence not addressed to the foreigners regularly used the term "barbarian" in referring to British and Americans. A number of documents came into British hands and are printed in the Blue Books. E.g. pp. 43, 44.

British vessels are to be " admitted to trade at such ports as far as Hankow, not exceeding three in number, as the British Minister, after consultation with the Chinese Secretary of State, may determine." By this article, the British are in fact excluded from the great commercial artery of the whole empire, from "the only line," as *The Morning Star* justly remarks, "by which they can push their manufactures into the interior."(1) If they will be good boys, and help the Imperial Government in dislodging the rebels from the regions now occupied by them, then they may eventually navigate the great river, but only to particular harbours. As to the new seaports opened, from " all " the ports as at first advertised, they have dwindled down to five ports, added to the five ports of the Treaty of Nanking, and, as a London paper remarks, " they are generally remote or insular." Besides, at this time of the day, the delusive notion of the growth of trade being proportionate to the number of ports opened, should have been exploded. Consider the harbours on the coasts of Great Britain, or France, or the United States; how few of them have developed themselves into real emporiums of commerce? Before the first Chinese war, the English traded exclusively to Canton. The concession of five new ports, instead of creating five new emporiums of commerce, has gradually transferred trade from Canton to Shanghai, as may be seen from the following figures, extracted from the Parliamentary Blue Book on the trade of various places for 1856-57. At the same time, it should be recollected that the Canton imports include the imports to Amoy and Pochow, which are transhipped at Canton.

(1) In discussing the earlier news of the Treaty *The Times* had stressed the advantages to " missionary labour:" the treaty strengthened " all the facilities for spreading our faith among the Chinese, for it permits all British subjects . . . to pass up and down throughout the length and breadth of China. This decisive concession opens up the whole country." The *Daily Telegraph* had declared that " the Chinese Empire is now thrown open throughout its length and breadth to trade and travel from the West." Unlike the Palmerstonian press, the *Daily News* of the same date (Sept. 16, 1858) thought it would be long before benefits could be realised, because the Taiping rebellion was undefeated." . . . the most precious of all the concessions, the navigation of the Yang-tse-kiang, and a consular post at Hankow, the great central emporium, is valueless while it is the battle ground of imperialists and insurgents. This great and wealthy city . . . is itself a deserted ruin. as are twenty other large cities along the line."

	British import trade to		British export trade to	
	Canton	Shanghai	Canton.	Shanghai.
1844.....	$15,500,000	$2,500,000	$17,900,000	$2,300,000
1845.....	10,700,000	5,100,000	27,700,000	6,000,000
1846.....	9,900,000	3,800,000	15,300,000	6,400,000
1847.....	9,600,000	4,300,000	15,700,000	6,700,000
1848.....	6,500,000	2,500,000	8,600,000	5,000,000
1849.....	7,900,000	4,400,000	11,400,000	6,500,000
1850.....	6,800,000	3,900,000	9,900,000	8,000,000
1851.....	10,000,000	5,400,000	13,200,000	11,500,000
1852.....	9,900,000	4,600,000	6,500,000	11,400,000
1853.....	4,000,000	3,900,000	6,500,000	13,300,000
1854.....	3,300,000	1,100,100	6,000,000	11,700,000
1855.....	3,600,000	3,400,000	2,900,000	19900000
1856.....	9,100,000	6,200,000	8,200,000	25,800,000

The "commercial clauses" of the treaty "are unsatisfactory," is a conclusion arrived at by the *Daily Telegraph*, Palmerston's most abject sycophant; but it chuckles at "the brightest point in the programme," viz: "that a British Minister may establish himself at Peking, while a Mandarin will install himself in London, and possibly invite the Queen to a ball at Albert Gate."(1) However John Bull may indulge this fun, there can be no doubt that whatever political influence may be exercised at Peking will fall to the part of Russia, which, by dint of the last treaty, holds a new territory, being as large as France, and, in great part, on its frontier, 800 miles only distant from Peking. It is by no means a comfortable reflection for John Bull that he himself, by his first opium war, procured Russia a treaty yielding her the navigation of the Amur and free trade on the land frontier, while by his second opium war he has helped her to the invaluable tract lying between the Gulf of Tartary and Lake Baikal, a region so much coveted by Russia that from Czar Alexey Michaelovitch down to Nicholas, she has always attempted to get it.(2) So deeply did the London *Times* feel

(1) *Daily Telegraph*, September 23, 1858: concessions to trade were "generally remote or insular." The Palmerstonian press criticism indicated mistrust in the Tory Government now in power (p. xxi) and their will or ability to get the concessions operated.

(2) See Note 8 to p. 51, and Summary of Events: 1844, 1858, 1860. Marx wrote to Engels (Oct. 8, 1858) "the present Anglo-Chinese Treaty which, in my opinion, was worked out by Palmerston in conjunction with the Petersburg Cabinet and given to Lord Elgin to take with him on his journey, is a mockery from beginning to end."

that sting that, in its publication of the St. Petersburg news, which greatly exaggerated the advantages won by Great Britain, good care was taken to suppress that part of the telegram which mentioned Russia's acquisition by treaty of the valley of the Amur.

13. THE NEW CHINESE WAR

New York Daily Tribune, October 1, 1859[1]

A Cabinet Council is announced for to-morrow in order to decide upon the course to be taken in regard to the Chinese catastrophe.[2] The lucubrations of the French *Moniteur* and the London *Times* leave no doubt as to the resolutions arrived at by Palmerston and Bonaparte. They want another Chinese war. I am informed from an authentic source that at the impending Cabinet Council Mr. Milner Gibson, in the first instance, will contest the validity of the plea for war; in the second instance, will protest against any declaration of war not previously sanctioned by both Houses of Parliament; and if his opinion be overwhelmed by a majority of votes, will secede from the Cabinet, thus again giving the signal for a new onslaught on Palmerston's administration and the break up of the Liberal coalition that led to the ousting of the Derby Cabinet. Palmerston is said to feel somewhat nervous as to the intended proceedings of Mr. Milner Gibson, the only one of his colleagues whom he is afraid of, and whom he has characterized more than once as a man peculiarly able "in picking holes."[3] It is possible that simultaneously with this letter you may receive from Liverpool the news of the results of the Ministerial Council. Meanwhile, the real bearing

(1) Correspondence of the *N.Y. Tribune*, London, September 16, 1859.

(2) See Summary of Events, June 1859, p. xxii. Between the present article and the last there is a gap of a year. Palmerston is again Prime Minister. "The New Chinese War," sometimes called the Third Opium War, constituted the final and fiercest phase of the Second Opium War, arising from the circumstances of the Tientsin Treaty ratification and the attempt to force the passage of the Peiho. See further No. 14.

(3) T. Milner Gibson (1806-1884) had been one of Bright and Cobden's most effective supporters in the Anti-Corn-Law League, M.P. for Manchester, 1841, Vice-President of the Board of Trade under Lord John Russell, 1846-48. He seconded the vote of censure on Palmerston in 1857 and very skilfully moved the vote of censure in relation to the Conspiracy Bill which led to Palmerston's resignation and in fact ended his 'dictatorship' in Feb. 1858. Gibson was now, however, in office under Palmerston and remained so; the debate referred to did not lead to any change. See p. 81.

of the case in question may be best judged, not from what has been printed, but from what has been wilfully suppressed by the Palmerston organs in their first publications of the news conveyed by the last overland mail.

First, then, they suppressed the statement that the Russian treaty had already been ratified, and that the Emperor of China had given instructions to his mandarins to receive and escort the American Embassy to the capital for the exchange of the ratified copies of the American treaty.[1] These acts were suppressed with a view to stifle the suspicion that would naturally arise, that the English and French Envoys, instead of the Court of Peking, are responsible for meeting obstacles in the transaction of their business which were not encountered either by their Russian or American colleagues. The other, still more important, fact that was at first suppressed by *The Times*, and the other Palmerston organs, but is now avowed on their part, is that the Chinese authorities had given notice of their willingness to conduct the English and French Envoys to Peking; that they were actually in waiting to receive them at one of the mouths of the river, and offered them an escort if they only consented to leave their vessels and troops. Now, as the treaty of Tien-tsin contains no clause granting to the English and French the right of sending a squadron of men-of-war up the Peiho, it becomes evident that the treaty was violated, not by the Chinese, but by the English, and that on the part of the latter there existed the foregone conclusion to pick a quarrel just before the period appointed for the exchange of the ratifications. Nobody will fancy that the Hon. Mr. Bruce[2] acted on his own responsibility in thus baffling the ostensible end aimed at by the last Chinese war, but that, on the contrary, he only executed secret instructions received from London. Now, it is true that Mr. Bruce was dispatched, not by Palmerston, but by Derby; but, then I have only to remind you that during the first administration of Sir Robert Peel, when Lord Aberdeen kept the seals of the Foreign Office, Sir Henry Bulwer, the English Ambassador at Madrid, picked a quarrel with the Spanish Court, resulting in his expulsion from Spain, and that, during the debates in the House of Lords on this "untoward event," it was proved that

(1) For the Russian and American treaties, see Summary of Events, June 1858, and p. xxii.

(2) The Hon. Frederick Bruce, the British envoy, Lord Elgin's brother.

Bulwer, instead of obeying the official instructions of Aberdeen, had acted up to the secret instructions of Palmerston, who then sat on the Opposition benches.

A manoeuvre has also been carried out during these last days in the Palmerstonian press, which leaves no doubt, at least to those acquainted with the secret history of English diplomacy during the last thirty years, as to the real author of the Peiho catastrophe and the impending third Anglo-Chinese war. *The Times* intimates that the guns planted on the forts of Taku which caused such havoc among the British squadron were of Russian origin, and were directed by Russian officers. Another Palmerstonian organ is still more plain spoken. I quote:

> "We now perceive how closely the policy of Russia is interwoven with that of Peking; we detect great movements on the Amur; we discern large Cossack armies manoeuvring far beyond Lake Baikal, in the frozen dreamland on the twilight borders of the Old World; we trace the course of innumerable caravans; we espy a special Russian envoy" (Gen. Mouravieff, the Governor of Eastern Siberia) "making his way, with secret designs, from the remoteness of Eastern Siberia to the secluded Chinese metropolis; and well may public opinion in this country burn at the thought that foreign influences have had a share in procuring our disgrace and the slaughter of our soldiers and sailors."(1)

Now, this is one of Lord Palmerston's old tricks. When Russia wanted to conclude a treaty of commerce with China, he drove the latter by the opium war into the arms of her northern neighbour. When Russia requested the cession of the Amur, he brought it about by the second Chinese war, and now that Russia wants to consolidate her influence at Peking, he extemporizes the third Chinese war. In all his transactions with the weak Asiatic States, with China, Persia, Central Asia, Turkey, it has always been his invariable and constant rule to ostensibly oppose Russia's designs by picking a quarrel, not with Russia, but with the Asiatic State, to estrange the latter from England by piratical hostilities, and

(1) *Daily Telegraph*, September 16, 1859. The extreme brutality of tone, demands for blood and slaughter etc., adopted after the initial British defeat on the Peiho (e.g. *Daily Telegraph* September 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19) was in harmony with the expressions so widely used during the Indian Mutiny.

by this roundabout way drive it to the concessions it had been unwilling to yield to Russia. You may be sure that on this occasion the whole past Asiatic policy of Palmerston will be again sifted, and I draw, therefore, your attention to the Afghan papers ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on the 8th June, 1859.(1) They throw more light on Palmerston's sinister policy, and the diplomatic history of the last thirty years, than any documents ever before printed. The case is, in a few words, this : In 1838 Palmerston commenced a war against Dost Mohammed, the ruler of Cabul, a war that led to the destruction of an English army, and was commenced on the plea of Dost Mohammed having entered into a secret alliance against England with Persia and Russia. In proof of this assertion, Palmerston laid, in 1839, before Parliament, a Blue Book, chiefly consisting of the correspondence of Sir A. Burnes, the British envoy at Cabul, with the Government at Calcutta. Burnes had been assassinated during an insurrection at Cabul against the English invaders, but, distrustful of the British Foreign Minister, had sent copies of some of his official letters to his brother, Dr. Burnes, at London. On the appearance, in 1839, of the "Afghan papers," prepared by Palmerston, Dr. Burnes accused him of having "garbled and forged the dispatches of the late Sir A. Burnes," and, in corroboration of his statement, had some of the genuine despatches printed. But it was only last summer that the murder came out. Under the Derby Ministry, on the motion of Mr. Hadfield, the House of Commons ordered all the Afghan papers to be published in full,(2) and this order has been executed in such a form as to constitute a demonstration, to the meanest capacity, of the truth of the charge of garbling and forgery, in the *interest of Russia.* On the title-page of the Blue Book appears the following:

> "*Note.—The correspondence, only partially given in former Returns, is here given entire, the omitted passages being marked by brackets,* [ ]."

The name of the official, which appears as a guaranty for the fidelity of the return, is "J. W. Kaye, Secretary in

(1) *Correspondence of Sir Alexander Burnes with the Governer General of India . . . during his mission to Cabul in the Years* 1837 *and* 1838, *or such Part thereof as has not already been Published . . .* [1859].

(2) Ordered by the House of Commons to be returned: 13 July, 1858; to be printed, 8 June, 1859.

Political and Secret Departments," Mr. Kaye being the " upright historian of the War in Afghanistan."(1)

Now, to illustrate the real relations of Palmerston with Russia, against which he pretended to have set up the Afghan war, one instance may suffice for the present. The Russian agent, Vickovitch, who came to Cabul in 1837, was the bearer of a letter from the Czar to Dost Mohammed, Sir Alexander Burnes obtained a copy of the letter, and sent it to Lord Auckland, the Governor-General of India. In his own despatches, and various documents inclosed by him, this circumstance is referred to over and over again. But the copy of the Czar's letter was expunged altogether from the papers presented by Palmerston in 1839, and in every despatch in which it is referred to, such alterations were made as were necessary to suppress the circumstance of the connection of the " Emperor of Russia " with the mission to Cabul. This forgery was committed in order to suppress the evidence of the Autocrat's connection with Vickovitch, whom, on his return to St. Petersburg, it suited Nicholas to formerly disavow. For instance, at page 82 of the Blue Book will be found the translation of a letter to Dost Mohammed, which reads now as follows, the brackets showing the words originally suppressed by Palmerston:

> " An ambassador on the part of [the] Russia [an Emperor] came [from Moscow] to Tehran, and has been appointed to wait on the Sirdars at Candahar, and thence to proceed to the presence of the Ameer. . . . He is the bearer of [confidential messages from the Emperor and of the] letters from the Russian ambassador at Tehran. The Russian ambassador recommends this man to be a most trusty individual, and to possess full authority to make any negotiations, [on the part of the Emperor and himself], etc., etc."

These, and similar forgeries committed by Palmerston in order to protect the honour of the Czar, are not the only curiosity exhibited by the " Afghan papers." The invasion of Afghanistan was justified by Palmerston on the ground that Sir Alexander Burnes had advised it as a proper means for baffling Russian intrigues in Central Asia. Now Sir A. Burnes did quite the contrary, and consequently all his appeals on

(1) (Sir) J. W. Kaye; The second edition of his *History of the War in Afghanistan* was published in 1858.

behalf of Dost Mohammed were altogether suppressed in Palmerston's edition of the "Blue Book;"[1] the correspondence being by dint of garbling and forgery, turned quite to the reverse of its original meaning. Such is the man now about to enter on a third Chinese war, on the ostensible plea of thwarting Russia's designs in that quarter.

[1] E.g. the long passage on p. 89 of the Blue Book.

14. [ANOTHER CIVILIZATION WAR]

New York Daily Tribune, October 10, 1859[1]

That there is to be another civilization war against the Celestials seems a matter now pretty generally settled with the English press. Still, since the meeting of the Cabinet Council on Saturday last, a remarkable change has come over those very papers that were foremost in the howl for blood. At first, the London *Times*, in an apparent trance of patriotic fury, thundered at the double treachery committed—by cowardly Mongols who lured on the *bonhomme* of the British Admiral by studiously falsifying appearances and screening their artillery— by the Court of Peking, which, with deeper Machiavelianism, had set those Mongol ogres to their damnable practical jokes. Curious to say, although tossed on a sea of passion, *The Times* had, in its reprints, contrived to carefully expunge from the original reports all points favourable to the doomed Chinaman. To confound things may be the work of passion, but to garble them seems rather the operation of a cool head. However that be, on Sept. 16, just one day before the meeting of the Ministers, *The Times* veered round, and, without much ado, cut one head off its Janus-headed impeachment. " *We fear*," it said, " that we cannot accuse the *Mongols* who resisted our attack on the forts of the Peiho of treachery"; but then, to make up for that awkward concession, it clung the more desperately to the deliberate and perfidious violation of a " solemn treaty " by " the *Court of Peking*."[2] Three days later, after the Cabinet Council had been held, *The Times*, on further consideration, even found " *no room for doubt* that if Mr. Bruce and M. de Bourboulon had . . . solicited the Mandarins to conduct them to Peking, they would have been permitted to effect the ratification" of the treaty. What, then, remains there of the treachery of the Court of

[1] " Correspondence of the *N.Y. Tribune*. London. Sept. 20, 1859." The references are to the unsuccessful British attempt to force the passage of the Peiho. See Summary of Events and Nos. 13, 15.

[2] *The Times*, Sept. 16, 1859, Marx's italics.

Peking? Not a shadow even, but in its place there remain two doubts on the mind of *The Times*. " It is," it says, " perhaps *doubtful* whether, as a *military* measure, it was wise to try with such a squadron, our way to Peking. It is *still more doubtful* whether, as a *diplomatic* measure, it was desirable to use force at all."(1) Such is the lame conclusion of all the indignation-bluster indulged in by the " leading organ," but, with a logic of its own, it drops the reasons for war without dropping the war itself. Another semi-Governmental paper, *The Economist*, which had distinguished itself by its fervent apology for the Canton bombardment, seems to take a more economical and less rhetorical view of things now that Mr. J. Wilson has got his appointment of Chancellor of the Exchequer for India(2) *The Economist* brings two articles on the subject, the one political, the other economical; the first one winding up with the following sentences:

> " Now, all these things considered, it is obvious that the article of the treaty which gave our Ambassador a right of visiting or residing at Peking, was one literally *forced* upon the Chinese Government; and if it were thought absolutely essential to our interests that it should be observed, we think there was much room for the display of consideration and patience in exacting its fulfilment. No doubt it may be said that with such a Government as the Chinese, delay and patience are interpreted as a sign of fatal weakness, and is therefore the most unsound policy we could pursue. But how *far* are we entitled, on this plea, to vary the principles on which we should assuredly act toward any civilized nation in our treatment of these Oriental Governments? When we have wrung out an unwelcome concession from their fears, it may be perhaps the most consistent policy to wring out, also from their fears, the immediate execution of the bargain in the way most convenient to ourselves. But if we fail in so doing—if, in the meantime, the Chinese overcome their fears, and insist, with a suitable display of force, on our consulting them as to the mode to be taken for giving our treaty effect—can we justly accuse them of treachery? Are they not rather practising

(1) Sept. 19, 1859, Marx's italics.

(2) James Wilson (c.f. Note, p.60) went out in October, 1859, as financial member of the Council of India, to reorganize Indian finances; he died in August, 1860.

upon us our own methods of persuasion? The Chinese Government *may*—and it is very likely that it is so—have intended to entrap us into this murderous snare, and never have purposed to execute the treaty at all. If this should prove to be so, we must and ought to exact reparation. But it may also prove that the intention to defend the mouth of the Peiho against the recurrence of such a violent entry as was made good by Lord Elgin in the previous year, was not accompanied by any desire to break faith on the general articles of the treaty. As the hostile initiative came entirely from our side, and it was, of course, at any moment competent to our commanders to retire from the murderous fire, opened only for the defence of the forts, we cannot certainly prove any intention of breaking faith on the part of China. And, till proof of a deliberate intention to break the treaty reaches us—we think we have some reason to suspend our judgment, and ponder whether we may not have been applying to our treatment of barbarians, a code of principles not very widely different from that which they have practised towards ourselves."(1)

In a second article on the same subject, *The Economist* dwells on the importance, direct and indirect, of the English trade to China.(2) In the year 1858, the British exports to China had risen to £2,876,000, while the value of the British imports from China had averaged upward of £9,000,000 for each of the last three years, so that the aggregate direct trade of England with China may be put down at about £12,000,000. But beside these direct transactions there are three other important trades with which, less or more, England is intimately connected in the circle of exchanges, the trade between India and China, the trade between China and Australia, and the trade between China and the United States. "Australia," says *The Economist*, "takes from China large quantities of tea annually, and has nothing to give in exchange which finds a market in China. America also takes large quantities of tea and some silk of a value far exceeding that of their direct exports to China." Both these balances in favour of China have to be made good by England, who is paid for this equalization of exchanges by the gold of Australia and the cotton of the United States. England, therefore, in-

(1) *Economist*, Sept. 17, 1859.
(2) Ibid.

dependently of the balance due by herself to China, has also to pay to that country large sums in respect to gold imported from Australia and cotton from America. Now this balance due to China by England, Australia, and the United States is, to a great extent, transferred from China to India, as a set-off against the amount due by China to India, on account of opium and cotton. Be it remarked, *en passant*, that the imports from China to India have never yet reached the amount of £1,000,000 sterling, while the exports to China from India realize the sum of nearly £10,000,000. The inference *The Economist* draws from these economical observations is, that any serious interruption of the British trade with China would "be a calamity of greater magnitude than the mere figures of our own exports and imports might at first sight suggest," and that the embarrassment consequent upon such a disturbance would not be felt in the direct British tea and silk trade only, but must also "affect" the British transactions with Australia and the United States. *The Economist* is, of course, aware of the fact that during the last Chinese war, the trade was not so much interfered with by the war as had been apprehended; and that, at the port of Shanghai, it was even not affected at all.

But then, *The Economist* calls attention to "two novel features in the present dispute" which might essentially modify the effects of a new Chinese war upon trade—these two novel features being the "imperial" not "local" character of the present conflict, and the "signal success" which, for the first time, the Chinese have effected against European forces. How very different sounds this language from the war cry *The Economist* so lustily shouted at the time of the Lorcha affair.

The Ministerial Council, as I anticipated in my last letter, witnessed Mr. Milner Gibson's protest against the war, and his menace of seceding from the Cabinet, should Palmerston act up to the foregone conclusions betrayed in the columns of the French *Moniteur*. For the moment Palmerston prevented any rupture of the Cabinet, and the Liberal Coalition, by the statement that the force indispensable for the protection of British trade should be gathered in the Chinese waters, while before the arrival of more explicit reports on the part of the British Envoy, no resolution should be taken as to the war question. Thus the burning question was put off. Palmerston's real intention, however, transpires through the columns of

his mob-organ *The Daily Telegraph*, which in one of its recent numbers says:

> "Should any event lead to a vote unfavourable to the Government in the course of next year, an appeal will certainly be made to the constituencies. . . . The House of Commons will test the result of their activity by a verdict on the Chinese question, seeing that to the professional malignants headed by Mr. Disraeli must be added the Cosmopolitans who declare that the Mongols were thoroughly in the right."

The fix in which the Tories are hemmed up, by having allowed themselves to become inveigled into the responsible editorship of events planned by Palmerston and enacted by two of his agents, Lord Elgin and Mr. Bruce, (Lord Elgin's brother) I shall, perhaps, find another occasion for remarking upon.

15. THE NEW CHINESE WAR

New York Daily Tribune, October 18, 1859[1]

In a former letter I asserted that the Peiho conflict had not sprung from accident, but, on the contrary, been beforehand prepared by Lord Elgin, acting upon Palmerston's secret instructions, and fastening upon Lord Malmesbury, the Tory Foreign Minister, the project of the noble Viscount, then seated at the head of the Opposition benches.[2] Now, first, the idea of the " accidents " in China arising from " instructions " drawn up by the present British Premier is so far from being new that, during the debates on the Lorcha war, it was suggested to the House of Commons by so well informed a personage as Mr. Disraeli, and, curious to say, confirmed by no less an authority than Lord Palmerston himself. On February 3, 1857, Mr. Disraeli warned the House of Commons in the following terms:

> " I cannot resist the conviction that what has taken place in China has not been in consequence of the alleged pretext, but is, in fact, in consequence of *instructions received from home*, some considerable time ago. If that be the case, I think the time has arrived when this House would not be doing its duty unless it earnestly considered whether it has any means of controlling a *system*, which if pursued, will be one, in my mind, fatal to the interests of this country." And Lord Palmerston most coolly replied: " The right hon. gentleman says the course of events appeared to be the result of *some system predetermined by the Government at home*. Undoubtedly, it was."[3]

(1) " Correspondence of the *N.Y.Tribune*. London, Sept. 30, 1859."

(2) In June, 1859, the Derby-Disraeli Ministry had been overthrown on their franchise bill. Palmerston resumed office though no longer as " dictator", and remained Prime Minister till his death in 1865. Gladstone and Lord John Russell, supporting him on the Italian question (Italian wars of 1859), had both joined his Cabinet and so had the Radical Milner Gibson (p. 72); a new phase of Whig Liberal party development was beginning.

(3) *The Times*, Feb. 4, 1857. Marx's italics.

In the present instance, a cursory glance at the Blue Book, entitled: "*Correspondence relative to the Earl of Elgin's special missions to China and Japan*, 1857-59"(1) will show how the event that occurred at the Peiho on the 25th June was already recorded by Lord Elgin on the 2nd of March. Page 484 of the said correspondence, we find the following two dispatches.

THE EARL OF ELGIN TO REAR-ADMIRAL SIR MICHAEL SEYMOUR.

Furious, March 2, 1859.

"SIR: With reference to my dispatch to your Excellency of the 17th ult., I would beg leave to state that I entertain some hope that the decision come to by her Majesty's Government on the subject of the permanent residence of a British Ambassador at Pekin, which I communicated to your Excellency in a conversation yesterday, may induce the Chinese Government to receive, in a becoming manner, the representative of her Majesty, when he proceeds to Pekin for the exchange of the ratifications of the treaty of Tien-tsin. At the same time, it is no doubt possible that this hope may not be realized, and, at any rate, I apprehend *that her Majesty's Government will desire* that the Ambassador, *when he proceeds to Tien-tsin*, be accompanied by an *imposing force*. Under these circumstances, I would venture to submit for your Excellency's consideration, whether it would not be expedient to concentrate at Shanghai at the earliest convenient period, a *sufficient* fleet of gunboats *for this service*, as Mr. Bruce's arrival in China cannot be long delayed. I have, etc. ELGIN and KINCARDINE."

THE EARL OF MALMESBURY TO THE EARL OF ELGIN.

FOREIGN OFFICE, May 2, 1859.

"My LORD: I have received your Excellency's dispatch of the 7th of March, 1859, and I have to inform you that her Majesty's Government approve of the note, of which a copy is therein inclosed, and in which your Excellency announced to the Imperial Commissioners that her Majesty's Government would not insist upon the residence of her Majesty's Minister being permanently fixed at Pekin.

"Her Majesty's Government also approve of *your having suggested* to Rear-Admiral Seymour that a fleet of

(1) Published in the summer of 1859. Referred to on other pages as the Elgin Correspondence.

gunboats should be collected at Shanghai in order to accompany Mr. Bruce *up the Peiho.*

" I am, etc. MALMESBURY "(1)

Lord Elgin, then, knows beforehand that the British Government " will desire " that his brother, Mr. Bruce, be accompanied by " an imposing force " of " gunboats " up the Peiho, and he orders Admiral Seymour to make ready " for this service." The Earl of Malmesbury, in his dispatch dated May 2, approved of the suggestion intimated by Lord Elgin to the Admiral. The whole correspondence exhibits Lord Elgin as the master, and Lord Malmesbury as the man. While the former constantly takes the initiative and acts upon the instructions originally received from Palmerston, without even waiting for new instructions from Downing Street, Lord Malmesbury contents himself with indulging " the desires " which his imperious subaltern anticipates him to feel. He nods assent when Elgin states that the treaty being not yet ratified, they had not the right to ascend any Chinese river; he nods assent, when Elgin thinks they ought to show much forbearance towards the Chinese in regard to the execution of the article of the treaty relating to the embassy to Pekin; and, nothing daunted, he nods assent when in direct contradiction to his own former statements, Elgin claims the right to enforce the passage of the Peiho by an " imposing fleet of gunboats." He nods assent in the same way that Dogberry nodded assent to the suggestions of the sexton.

The sorry figure cut by the Earl of Malmesbury and the humility of his attitude, are easily understood if one calls to mind the cry raised on the advent of the Tory Cabinet by the London *Times* and other influential papers, as to the great peril threatening the brilliant success which Lord Elgin, under the instructions of Palmerston, was about to secure in China, but which the Tory Administration, if for pique only, and in order to justify their vote of censure on Palmerston's Canton bombardment, were likely to baffle. Malmesbury allowed himself to be intimidated by that cry. He had, moreover, before his eyes and in his heart the fate of Lord Ellenborough, who had dared openly to counteract the Indian policy of the noble Viscount, and in reward for his patriotic

(1) Elgin Correspondence, p. 484, Marx's italics.

courage, was sacrificed by his own colleagues of the Derby Cabinet. Consequently, Malmesbury resigned the whole initiative into the hands of Elgin, and thus enabled the latter to execute Palmerston's plan on the responsibility of his official antagonists, the Tories. It is this same circumstance which for the present has put the Tories in a very dismal alternative as to the course to be taken in regard to the Peiho affair. Either they must sound the war trumpet with Palmerston, and thus keep him in office, or they must turn their backs on Malmesbury, upon whom they heaped such sickening flatteries during the late Italian war.(1)

The alternative is the more trying since the impending third China war is anything but popular with the British mercantile classes. In 1857 they bestrode the British lion, because they expected great commercial profits from a forcible opening of the Chinese market. At this moment, they feel, on the contrary, rather angry at seeing the fruits of the treaty obtained, all at once snapped away from their hold. They know that affairs look menacing enough in Europe and India, without the further complication of a Chinese war on a grand scale. They have not forgotten that, in 1857, the imports of tea fell by upward of 24 millions of pounds, that being the article almost exclusively exported from Canton, which was then the exclusive theatre of war, and they apprehend that this interruption of trade by war may now be extended to Shanghai and the other trading ports of the Celestial Empire. After a first Chinese war undertaken by the English in the interest of opium smuggling, and a second war carried on for the defence of the lorcha of a pirate, nothing was wanted for a climax but a war extemporized for the purpose of pestering China with the nuisance of permanent Embassies at its capital.

(1) Lord Malmesbury. For his own account, see his *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, 1885.

16. TRADE WITH CHINA

New York Daily Tribune, December 3, 1859[1]

At a time when very wild views obtained as to the impulse American and British commerce were sure to receive from the throwing open, as it was called, of the Celestial Empire, we undertook to show, by a somewhat elaborate review of Chinese foreign commerce since the commencement of this century, that those high-flown anticipations had no solid ground to stand upon. Quite apart from the opium-trade, which we proved to grow in an inverse ratio to the sale of Western manufactures, we found the main obstacle to any sudden expansion of the import trade to China in the economical structure of Chinese society, depending upon the combination of minute agriculture with domestic industry. We may now, in corroboration of our former statements, refer to the Blue Book entitled, *Correspondence Relative to Lord Elgin's Special Missions to China and Japan.*

Wherever the real demand for commodities imported into Asiatic countries does not answer the supposed demand—which in most instances is calculated on such superficial data as the extent of the new market, the magnitude of its population, and the vent foreign wares used to find at some outstanding seaports—commercial men, in their eagerness at securing a larger area of exchange, are too prone to account for their disappointment by the circumstance that artificial arrangements, invented by barbarian Governments, stand in their

[1] This article, which shows Marx developing theoretical conclusions about China as compared with India, was printed, without title or attribution to a correspondent, among some miscellaneous items. But the day was one of great events; the *Tribune's* leading article, entitled: "John Brown Dead," began with the words: "Slavery has killed John Brown." The main news story was headed: "The Execution of John Brown. He makes No Speech. He Dies Easy. Brown Firm and Dignified to the Last"; it related how John Brown's body was taken back from Charlestown to Harper's Ferry. Little more than two years later Marx's articles for the *Tribune* ended when America was in the midst of the Civil War.

way, and may, consequently, be cleared away by main force. This very delusion has, in our epoch, converted the British merchant, for instance, into the reckless supporter of every Minister who, by piratical aggressions, promises to extort a treaty of commerce from the barbarian. Thus the artificial obstacles foreign commerce was supposed to encounter on the part of the Chinese authorities, formed, in fact, the great pretext which, in the eyes of the mercantile world, justified every outrage committed on the Celestial Empire. The valuable information contained in Lord Elgin's Blue Book will, with every unprejudiced mind, go far to dispel such dangerous delusions.

The Blue Book contains a report, dated in 1852, of Mr. Mitchell, a British agent at Canton, to Sir George Bonham, from which we quote the following passage:

> "Our Commercial Treaty with this country (China) has now (1852) been nearly ten years in full work, every presumed impediment has been removed, one thousand miles of new coast have been opened up to us, and four new marts established at the very thresholds of the producing districts, and at the best possible points upon the seaboard. And yet, what is the result as far as the promised increase in the consumption of our manufactures is concerned? Why, plainly this: That at the end of ten years the tables of the Board of Trade show us that Sir Henry Pottinger found a larger trade in existence when he signed the Supplementary Treaty in 1843 than his Treaty itself shows us at the end of 1850!—that is to say, as far as our home manufactures are concerned, which is the sole question we are now considering."

Mr. Mitchell admits that the trade between India and China, consisting almost exclusively in an exchange of silver for opium, has been greatly developed since the treaty of 1842, but, even in regard to this trade, he adds:

> "It developed itself in as fast a ratio, from 1834 to 1844, as it has done from the latter date to the present, which latter period may be taken as its working under the supposed protection of the Treaty; while, on the other hand, we have the great fact staring us in the face, in the Tables of the Board of Trade, that the export of our manufacturing stuffs to China was less by nearly three-quarters of a million

sterling at the close of 1850 than it was at the close of 1844."(1)

That the treaty of 1842 had no influence at all in fostering the British export trade to China will be seen from the following tabular statement:

DECLARED VALUE IN POUNDS STERLING

	1849	1850	1851	1852	1853
Cotton Goods	1,001,283	1,020,915	1,598,829	1,905,321	1,408,433
Woollen do	370,878	404,797	373,399	434,616	203,875
Other articles.....	164,948	148,433	189,040	163,662	137,289
Total.....	1,537,109	1,574,145	2,161,268	2,503,599	1,749,597

	1854	1855	1856	1857
Cotton Goods	640,820	883,985	1,544,235	1,731,909
Woollen Goods.....	156,959	134,070	268,642	286,852
Other articles	202,937	259,889	403,246	431,221
Total.....	1,000,716	1,277,944	2,216,123	2,449,982

Now, comparing these figures with the Chinese demand for British manufactures in 1843, stated by Mr. Mitchell to have amounted to £1,750,000, it will be seen that in five out of the last nine years the British exports fell far below the level of 1843, and in 1854 were only 10-17 of what they had been in 1843. Mr. Mitchell, in the first instance, explains this startling fact by some reasons which appear too general to prove anything in particular. He says:

"The habits of the Chinese are so thrifty, and so hereditary, that they wear just what their fathers wore before them; that is to say, just enough and no more of anything, no matter how cheap it may be offered them. No working Chinaman can afford to put on a new coat which shall not last him at least three years and stand the wear and tear of the roughest drudgery during that period. Now, a garment of that description must contain at least three times the weight of raw cotton which we put into the heaviest goods we import to China; that is to say, it must be three times as heavy as the heaviest drills and domestics we can afford to send out here."(2)

(1) Mitchell's Report: pp. 243, 244 of the Elgin Correspondence.
(2) Elgin Correspondence, pp. 245, 246.

Absence of wants, and predilection for hereditary modes of dress, are obstacles which civilized commerce has to encounter in all new markets. As to the thickness and strength of drills, might British and American manufacturers not adapt their wares to the peculiar requirements of the Chinese? But here we come to the real point at issue. In 1844, Mr. Mitchell sent some samples of the native cloth of every quality to England, with the prices specified. His correspondents assured him that they could not produce it in Manchester, and much less ship it to China, at the rates quoted. Whence this inability in the most advanced factory system of the world to undersell cloth woven by hand in the most primitive looms? The combination we have already pointed to, of minute agriculture with domestic industry, solves the riddle. We quote again from Mr. Mitchell:

"When the harvest is gathered, all hands in the farm-house, young and old together, turn to carding, spinning, and weaving this cotton; and out of this home-spun stuff a heavy and durable material, adapted to the rough handling it has to go through for two or three years, they clothe themselves, and the surplus they carry to the nearest town, where the shopkeeper buys it for the use of the population of the towns, and the boat people on the rivers. With this homespun stuff, nine out of every ten human beings in this country are clothed, the manufacture varying in quality from the coarsest dungaree to the finest nanking, all produced in the farm-houses, and costing the producer literally nothing beyond the value of the raw material, or rather of the sugar which he exchanged for it, the produce of his own husbandry. Our manufacturers have only to contemplate for a moment the admirable economy of this system, and, so to speak, its exquisite dovetailing with the other pursuits of the farmer, to be satisfied, at a glance, that they have no chance whatever in the competition, as far as the coarser fabrics are concerned. It is, perhaps, characteristic of China alone, of all countries in the world, that the loom is to be found in every well-conditioned homestead. The people of all other countries content themselves with carding and spinning, and at that point stop short, sending the yarn to the professional weaver to be made into cloth. It was reserved for the thrifty Chinaman to carry the thing out to perfection. He not only cards and

spins his cotton, but he weaves it himself, with the help of his wives and daughters, and farm servants, and hardly ever confines himself to producing for the mere wants of his family, but makes it an essential part of his season's operations to produce a certain quantity of cloth for the supply of neighbouring towns and rivers.

"The Fui-kien farmer is thus not merely a farmer, but an agriculturist and a manufacturer in one. He produces this cloth literally for nothing, beyond the cost of the raw material; he produces it, as shown, under his own roof-tree, by the hands of his women and farm servants; it costs neither extra labour nor extra time. He keeps his domestics spinning and weaving while his crops are growing, and after they are harvested, during rainy weather, when out-of-door labour cannot be pursued. In short, at every available interval throughout the year round, does this model of domestic industry pursue his calling, and engage himself upon something useful."(1)

As a complement of Mr. Mitchell's statement may be considered the following description Lord Elgin gives of the rural population he met with during his voyage up the Yang-tse-kiang:

"What I have seen leads me to think that the rural population of China is, generally speaking, well-doing and contented. I worked very hard, though with only indifferent success, to obtain from them accurate information respecting the extent of their holdings, the nature of their tenure, the taxation which they have to pay, and other kindred matters. I arrived at the conclusion that, for the most part, they hold their lands, which are of very limited extent, in full property from the Crown, subject to certain annual charges of no very exorbitant amount, and that these advantages, improved by assiduous industry, supply abundantly their simple wants, whether in respect of food or clothing."(2)

It is this same combination of husbandry with manufacturing industry, which, for a long time, withstood, and still checks, the export of British wares to East India; but there that combination was based upon a peculiar constitution of

(1) Elgin Correspondence, pp. 245, 246.

(2) Ibid. p. 443.

the landed property which the British, in their position as the supreme landlords of the country, had it in their power to undermine, and thus forcibly convert part of the Hindu self-sustaining communities into mere farms, producing opium, cotton, indigo, hemp, and other raw materials, in exchange for British stuffs. In China the English have not yet wielded this power, nor are they likely ever to do so.

17. ENGLISH POLITICS

New York Tribune, February 14, 1860[1]

THE MOST interesting topics touched upon in the Parliamentary address debates were the third Chinese war, the commercial treaty with France,[2] and the Italian complication. The Chinese question, it ought to be understood, involves not only an international question, but also a constitutional question of vital import. The second Chinese war, undertaken on the arbitrary behest of Lord Palmerston, having led first to a vote of censure against his Cabinet, and then to a forcible dissolution of the House of Commons—the new House, although elected under his own auspices, was never called upon to cashier the sentence passed by its predecessor. To this very moment Lord Palmerston's second Chinese war stands condemned by a Parliamentary verdict. But this is not all.

On the 16th of September, 1859, the account of the repulse on the Peiho was received in England. Instead of summoning Parliament, Lord Palmerston addressed himself to Louis Bonaparte, and conversed with the autocrat on a new Anglo-French expedition against China. During three months, as Lord Grey says, the British ports and arsenals "have resounded with the din of preparation," and measures were taken for dispatching artillery, stores, and gun-boats to China, and for sending large forces of not less than 10,000 men, in addition to the naval forces. The country having thus been fairly embarked in a new war, on the one hand by a treaty with France, on the other by a vast expenditure incurred without any previous communication to Parliament, the latter, on its meeting, is coolly asked "to thank Her Majesty for having informed them of what had happened and of the preparations that were being made for an expedition to China."[3] In what different style could Louis Napoleon

(1) "Correspondence of the *N.Y. Tribune*. London Jan. 27, 1860."

(2) The French Commercial Treaty, for which Cobden was largely responsible. Marx's article on it (dated Jan. 28, 1860) appeared in the same issue of the *Tribune* as the present article.

(3) Lord Grey's amendment to the Address, House of Lords Debate on the Queen's Speech, Jan. 24, 1860.

himself have addressed his own *corps législatif*, or the Emperor Alexander his senate?

In the debate on the Address in the House of Commons in 1857, Mr. Gladstone, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Persian war, had indignantly exclaimed: "I will say, without fear of contradiction, that the practice of commencing wars without associating Parliament with the first measures is utterly at variance with the *established practice* of the country, *dangerous to the Constitution, and absolutely requiring the intervention of this House*, in order to render the repetition *of so dangerous a proceeding* utterly impossible."(1) Lord Palmerston has not only repeated the proceeding, "so dangerous to the Constitution"; he has not only repeated it this time with the concurrence of the sanctimonious Mr. Gladstone, but as if to try the strength of ministerial irresponsibility, wielding the rights of Parliament against the Crown, the prerogatives of the Crown against Parliament, and the privileges of both against the people—he had the boldness to repeat the dangerous proceeding within the same sphere of action. His one Chinese war being censured by the Parliament, he undertakes another Chinese war in spite of Parliament. Still, in both Houses, only one man mustered courage enough to make a stand against this ministerial usurpation; and, curious to say, that one man belonging not to the popular, but to the aristocratic branch of the Legislature. The man is Lord Grey. He proposed an amendment to the Address in answer to the Queen's Speech to the purport that the expedition ought not to have been entered upon before the sense of both Houses of Parliament was taken.(2)

The manner in which Lord Grey's amendment was met,

(1) Gladstone's speech (Feb. 3, 1857) was quoted by Lord Grey in the debate. Jan 24, 1860. Marx's italics. Gladstone was now Chancellor of the Exchequer in Palmerston's Cabinet.

(2) The Third Earl Grey (1802-1894) son of Earl Grey of the Reform Act, had been Colonial Secretary and Whig leader in the House of Lords at the crucial period of colonial policy 1846-52, and never again held office but long remained an independent critic of both parties. His amendment to the Address regretted that Parliament had not been informed of the preparations for the expedition, or given an "opportunity of forming a judgment on their propriety", or of sanctioning the expenses that would be incurred. He refused to withdraw it, on the ground that "this was the first time such an expedition had been fitted out without the concurrence of Parliament"; it was negatived. (Jan. 24, 1860). The constitutional question had been previously raised (pp. 26, 72).

both by the spokesman of the ministerial party and the leader of Her Majesty's opposition, is highly characteristic of the political crisis which the representative institutions of England are rapidly approaching. Lord Grey conceded that, in a formal sense, the Crown enjoyed the prerogative of entering upon wars, but since ministers were interdicted from spending one single farthing on any enterprise without the previous sanction of Parliament, it was the constitutional law and practice that the responsible representatives of the Crown should never enter upon warlike expeditions before notice having been given to Parliament, and the latter been called upon to make provision for defraying the expenditure which might be thus incurred. Thus, if the council of the nation thought fit, it might check, in the beginning, any unjust or impolitic war contemplated by ministers. His Lordship then quoted some examples in order to show how strictly these rules were formerly adhered to. In 1790, when some British vessels were seized by the Spaniards on the north-west coast of America, Pitt brought down to both Houses a message from the Crown calling for a vote of credit to meet the probable expenses. Again, in December 1826, when the daughter of Don Pedro applied to England for assistance against Ferdinand VII. of Spain, who intended an invasion of Portugal to the benefit of Don Miguel, Canning brought down a similar message notifying to Parliament the nature of the case and the amount of expenditure likely to be incurred. In conclusion Lord Grey broadly intimated that the Ministry had dared to raise taxes upon the country without the concurrence of Parliament, since the large expenditure already incurred must have been defrayed one way or an other, and could not have been defrayed without encroaching upon money-grants provided for entirely different demands.

Now which sort of reply did Lord Grey elicit on the part of the cabinet? The Duke of Newcastle, who had been foremost in protesting against the lawfulness of Palmerston's second Chinese war, answered, in the first instance, that "the very wholesome practice" had arisen of late years of "never moving an amendment to the Address . . . unless some great *party object*" was to be attained.(1) Consequently, Lord

(1) *The Times*, Jan. 25, 1860: ". . . unless some great party objects were sought to be attained." Hansard (House of Lords, Jan. 24, 1860) has: ". . . unless some great political objects were in view and likely to be attained."

Grey being not prompted by factious motives, and pretending not to aspire to put Ministers out in order to put himself in, what, for the life of the Duke of Newcastle, could he mean by infringing upon that " very wholesome practice of late years "? Was he crotchety enough to fancy that they were to break lances except for great party objects ? In the second instance, was it not notorious that the constitutional practice, so anxiously adhered to by Pitt and Canning, had been over and over again departed from by Lord Palmerston ? Had that noble Viscount not carried on a war of his own in Portugal in 1831, in Greece in 1850, and, as the Duke of Newcastle might have added, in Persia, in Afghanistan and in many other countries ? Why, if Parliament had allowed Lord Palmerston to usurp to himself the right of war and peace and taxation during the course of thirty years, why, then, should they all at once try to break from their long servile tradition ? Constitutional law might be on the side of Lord Grey, but prescription was undoubtedly on the side of Lord Palmerston. Why call the noble Viscount to account at this time of the day, since never before had he been punished for similar " wholesome " innovations ? In fact, the Duke of Newcastle seemed rather indulgent in not accusing Lord Grey of rebellion for his attempt at breaking through Lord Palmerston's prescriptive privilege of doing with his own—the forces and the money of England—as he liked.

Equally original was the manner in which the Duke of Newcastle endeavoured to prove the legality of the Peiho expedition. There exists an Anglo-Chinese treaty of 1843 by dint of which England enjoys all the rights conceded by the Celestials to the most favoured nations. Now Russia, in her recent treaty with China, has stipulated for the right of sailing up the Peiho. Consequently, under the treaty of 1843, the English had a right to such passage. This, the Duke of Newcastle said, he might insist upon " without any great special pleading." Might he, indeed! On the one side there is the ugly circumstance that the Russian treaty was only ratified, and, consequently dates its actual existence only from an epoch posterior to the Peiho catastrophe. This, of course, is but a slight *husteron proteron.* On the other hand, it is generally known that a state of war suspends all existing treaties. If the English were at war with the Chinese at the time of the Peiho expedition, they, of course, could appeal

neither to the treaty of 1843, nor to any other treaty whatever. If they were not at war, Palmerston's Cabinet has taken upon itself to commence a new war without the sanction of Parliament.

To escape the latter power of the dilemma, poor Newcastle asserts that since the Canton bombardment, for the last two years, " England had *never* been *at peace* with China." Consequently the Ministry had pushed on hostilities, not recommenced them, and consequently he might, without special pleading, appeal to the treaties effective only during a time of peace. And to heighten the beauty of this queer sort of dialectics, Lord Palmerston, the chief of the Cabinet, asserts at the same time, in the House of Commons, that England all this time over "*had never been at war with China.*" They were not so now. There were, of course, Canton bombardments, Peiho catastrophes, and Anglo-French expeditions, but there was no war, since war had never been *declared*, and since, to this moment, the Emperor of China had allowed transactions at Shanghai to proceed in their usual course. The very fact of his having broken, in regard to the Chinese, through all the legitimate international forms of war, Palmerston pleads as a reason for dispensing also with the constitutional forms in regard to the British Parliament, while his spokesman in the House of Lords, Earl Granville, " with regard to China," disdainfully declares " *the consultation of Parliament by Government*" to be " *a purely technical point.*" The consultation of Parliament by Government a purely technical point!

What difference, then, does still remain between a British Parliament and a French *Corps Législatif*? In France, it is, at least, the presumed heir of a national hero who dares to place himself in the place of the nation, and who at the same time openly confronts all the dangers of such usurpation. But, in England, it is some subaltern spokesman, some worn-out place-hunter, some anonymous nonentity of a so-called Cabinet, that, relying on the donkey power of the Parliamentary mind and the bewildering evaporations of an anonymous press, without making any noise, without incurring any danger, quietly creep their way to irresponsible power. Take on the one hand the commotions raised by a Sulla; take on the other the fraudulent business-like manœuvres of the manager of a joint stock bank, the secretary of a benevolent society, or the clerk of a vestry, and you will understand the difference

between imperialist usurpation in France and ministerial usurpation in England!

Lord Derby, fully aware of the equal interest both factions have in securing ministerial impotence and irresponsibility, could, of course, " not concur with the noble Earl (Grey) in the strong views which he takes of the *laches* of Government." He could not quite concur in Lord Grey's complaint that " the Government ought to have called Parliament together, to have consulted them on the Chinese question," but he " certainly would not support him by his vote should he press the amendment to a division."(1)

Consequently, the amendment was not pressed to a division, and the whole debate, in both Houses, on the Chinese war evaporated in grotesque compliments showered by both factions on the head of Admiral Hope for having so gloriously buried the English forces in the mud.(2)

(1) Lord Derby cf. p. 20[2].

(2) See Summary of Events.

Note: Marx wrote three further articles on China in 1860 but these were not published. The last article by him published in the *New York Tribune* was on the Mexican civil war (March 10, 1862). Meanwhile, great changes were taking place; the American Civil War (1861-65); the abolition of serfdom in Russia (1861); the formation of the International Workingmen's Association (1864); the defeat of Austria by Prussia (1866); the first working class franchise in Britain (1867).

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